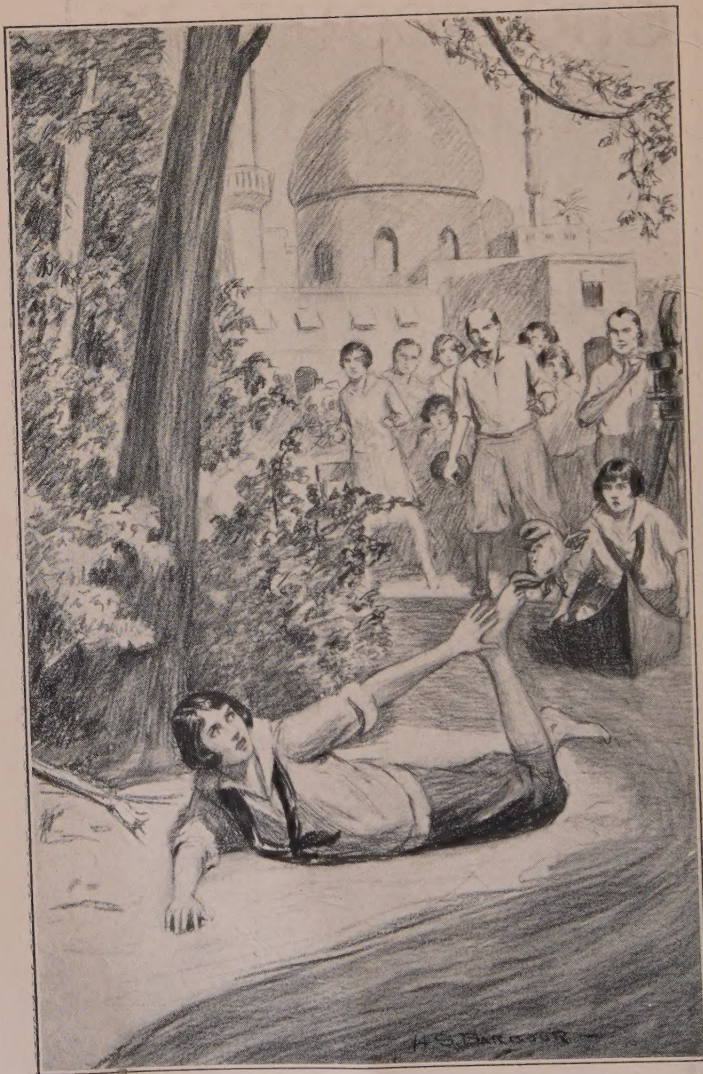


GIRL SCOUTS *in the* MAGIC CITY



LILLIAN E. ROY

**GIRL SCOUTS
IN THE MAGIC CITY**



As Julie threw herself upon the sand her foot displayed
a crab clinging to her toes.

Girl Scouts in the Magic City.

Frontispiece (Page 151)

GIRL SCOUTS IN THE MAGIC CITY

BY

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THE POLLY BREWSTER BOOKS,
THE LITTLE WASHINGTON BOOKS,
THE GIRL SCOUTS BOOKS, ETC.

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GIRL SCOUTS IN THE MAGIC CITY

CHAPTER I

A DREAM COME TRUE

"JULIE, had you said to me not less than a month ago that we would be winning our greatest desire—getting in the movies to produce girl scout pictures—I should have said with a jeer: 'Dream on, fair maiden'. And now! Just fancy—here we are really going to turn the trick."

It was Joan speaking, and she was so thrilled at the prospect of going to Hollywood to be starred in a film that she spoke of nothing else to her friends in the scout Troop. But Joan wasn't the only one so elated over the offer of the Stellar Picture Company. There were the other members of Dandelion Troop, that had toured all that summer in California; and there were certain young male admirers of these scouts—all rejoiced at the prospects of having the company of the girls for an

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extended time. Of these boys there were Sandy, the handsome young Forest Ranger, who had played a main lead in the trip of the girls to the Southwest one season; then there was Rex Hamilton, the screen favorite, who had made this dream come true for the scouts; and young Fairfax, only son of the well-known lumber chief of the East; and the two Henderson boys, both claiming to be in love with all girl scouts and two in particular—but more of this anon, because Mrs. Vernon, the Captain of the Troop, has a great deal to say about such matters.

“I suppose we ought to feel very grateful to Rex for managing this offer so neatly?” ventured Julie. “However, I’d love to think we won the offer on our own merits, eh?”

“It really was our own merit that opened the way—if I am any sort of a judge of human nature. Why, in the name of goodness, no one has thought of a feature picture of girl scouts before, I can’t understand,” said Joan.

“Have you stopped to think that it is a lucky thing for us that no one *has* produced a Girl Scout thriller before? It gives us the big chance—that of driving the wedge of an entirely new plot and picture. Everyone wants to see something different from the

same old pictures, all of which run along the same old line and turn out in the same old way. Now *we* will show the world a thing or two, or I lose my bet on this film," declared Julie positively.

At this point in the conversation between Juliet Lee and her friend, Joan Allison, a third girl joined them. It was Betty Lee, Julie's twin sister, and strange to say, as different from Julie in all ways as dark is from light: complexion, temperament, and preferences.

"Girls, Verny sent me to tell you to hurry with your dressing. Breakfast is waiting, and the boys say they want an early start from here, in order to find a good camp for the night, before dark," was Betty's message.

"Is Sandy going with us?" asked Julie wonderingly.

"I don't think so," returned Betty. "I heard Faxy coaxing him to do so, but Sandy says he has to straighten out a lot of things in the Station, before he can expect to leave to be gone for several weeks."

"Several weeks! Perhaps he means several months! If he believes he can rush a picture through as he wants to in a few weeks, he has another guess coming," laughed Joan.

"Well, I did what I was told; and now I'm going back to eat some of that delicious-smelling bacon and toast," announced Betty, as she turned to leave the tent, where the girls had camped for the night up on the mountain.

Julie and Joan hastened with the rest of their morning's toilette, and then appeared looking as sweet and attractive as young girls can look, when they are bubbling over with perfect health and harmony in body, mind and spirit.

"Good morning, girls," greeted Mrs. Vernon, as she saw the two scouts coming from back of the row of tents, "have you used 'Bear's Soap'?"

A titter rewarded this query, and the two tardy members of the party came up and dropped upon the grass, in the vacant places left for them around the breakfast spread.

"We may have forgotten to use 'Bear's Soap', but we haven't forgotten to come to breakfast with Bears' appetites, after a long winter's fast," declared Julie, pouncing upon the plate of toast which happened to be right in front of her. "Here, Jo, I'll share this my portion with you." As she spoke, the irrepressible girl pushed several slices of beautifully browned toast to one side of the huge platter and appropriated the remainder for herself.

"Why, Julie!" cried Betty, horrified at her sister's lack of courtesy. "How can you act so? Besides you couldn't possibly eat all that toast. It is meant for *all* of us."

The laughter of the circle of friends urged Julie to reply seriously. "But you haven't any idea of the vacancy inside me, which waits to be filled, Betzy. If those present feel as I do they will have to ask the cook to send in just such a platter full of nice toast for each one. Here goes for my share!" And the scout lifted the platter and placed it upon her knees. Betty gasped and turned to the Captain.

"Verny, I never knew Julie to act so selfish before. Why, it is as bad as though she were a glutton!"

Betty's real distress over the matter brought forth a peal of laughter from the others, but Mrs. Vernon controlled her face and assured the concerned sister that Julie was only teasing.

"Don't be so sure of that, Verny," retorted Julie. While she turned to address this remark to the Captain, Judith Blake slyly thrust her hands forth and captured the prize. In the fray that immediately followed, you might have said the toast ran dreadful risks of being scattered far and wide; but the girls prided themselves upon their gift of accurate

balancing, and finally, the platter was deposited upon the oil-cloth exactly where Julie had found it—and its contents was as presentable, though not so warm and crisp, as it had been when Julie spied it.

“Girls, I wish you’d try to realize that your time is not your own now,” said Mrs. Vernon. “If you are going to work for the Stellar Picture Company, you owe it to them to give all your time, as well as consideration to them.”

“We will, Verny, but we have not signed up yet. And this one last day ought to be allowed us for getting rid of all our silly ideas and bear play,” explained Julie.

“Betty said that Sandy would not travel with us to-day. Is that so, Sandy?” asked Joan.

“You can’t possibly miss me, when there are so many eager and brave cavaliers to escort you,” retorted the Forest Ranger. “So permit me to stay and arrange all my affairs here, in order to give me the vacation, in Hollywood, necessary to produce the pictures I want done.”

“How long will it be before you join us there?” asked Jo.

“A few days at the most,” answered Sandy. But he sent a pertinent glance at Julie, to learn if she felt sorry to find that he would not accompany the

group. Since Sandy would be safe at the Lookout for the time being, Julie could afford to express a polite regret at the fact.

"That's too bad, Sandy. You will be lonely on your ride to Hollywood; and we will miss your companionship a lot."

Sandy said nothing, because he felt that Julie's speech was more perfunctory than regretful. Faxy instantly changed the subject.

"Gilly hasn't slept a wink since he heard the welcome tidings that he might have a chance to show himself in a picture."

Everyone laughed and turned to study Mr. Gilroy's face. And he, delighting to please the Dandelioners, nodded his head approvingly, as he said: "I'm sure of being in the foreground of many scenes of these Girl Scouts' pictures, because without me they never can follow the theme of the story."

"But we might select a proxy to act for you, if you show any tendency to pose always in the center of the stage, and thus cast the rest of us in shadow," retorted the Captain.

"Well, poor Gilly will have to occupy a much larger section of the stage than the others, because he is no successful a dietitian as I am," bragged

Mr. Vernon, glancing at Mr. Gilroy's well-rounded figure.

As this subject of Gilly's rotundity was the standing joke between Mr. Vernon and his friend, the girls laughed merrily at the remark. Such encouragement usually made the sparring with words between the two combatants a lively one. Now, however, the Captain's interference ended the prospect of such teasing.

"Gilly, if you and V. are not ready to start with us, you will be left here to come on later with Sandy!"

"Why, my dear, we are not laggards," protested Mr. Vernon.

"But you both require so *much* food, and you have only started your first installment. Before you call for the second, we shall be quite through, and ready to leave," explained the Captain.

"So stop your talking and ply knife and fork," advised Joan.

During the remainder of the breakfast time both men pretended obedience and not a word would they utter—not even when Mrs. Vernon asked Gilly if he would have another cup of coffee. He merely made signs with his fingers, such as mutes are wont to do.

Finally the scout party was ready to start on the way to Hollywood. The Forest Rangers, who had played hosts so agreeably, were thanked most sincerely by the girls and their Captain, and the other friends in the party invited the hosts to be sure and visit them at their homes, if they ever happened to be within visiting distance. Then the party rode away, Sandy watching till the last sign of Julie had disappeared.

I am sure the reader is acquainted with the group of Girl Scouts, known as the Dandelion Troop. Nevertheless it might be well to give you a short synopsis of the doings of the Dandelioners before this event. In the first volume, *Girl Scouts of Dandelion Camp*, Mrs. Vernon, the Captain, and the girls, Juliet and Betty Lee, Joan Allison and Ruth Bentley, plan a scout group. They enlist the interests of several friends, Judith and Edith Blake, Hester Wynant, Anne Bailey, and other girls of Elmertown, and enjoy their first summer's camp on the mountain range a few miles from the village. Here they learn their first lessons in scoutdom, and strive to win the reward of being enrolled as a Troop in regular standing with the national organization. This they achieved before it was time to break camp, to return home and resume school work.

But certain thrilling events, that occurred to the girls during their camplife on the mountain, were never known at Headquarters. One of these events was the rescue of Mr. Gilroy from two escaped convicts near Blue Beard's Cave on the ridge of the mountain; and later, the capture of these two convicts. The gratitude of Mr. Gilroy then expressed itself in the invitation for the girl scouts to spend their second summer on his wonderful estate, on the shores of a lake, of the Fulton Chain in the Adirondacks.

The second volume of the series, *Girl Scouts in the Adirondacks*, tells how the girls competed with the boys; the girls' scout camp on one side of the Gilroy estate, and the boys' scout camp on the other side. In all the camp lore, in things made for camping, in testing for honors for various traits of character, such as courage, endurance, observation, etc., the girls had far the best records. Then Mr. Gilroy invited the girls to join the canoeing party planned by the boy scouts, and the climax of that season's thrills happened. It was the fire which threatened to destroy the summer resort at the end of Racquet Lake, where the scouts, with great presence of mind and bravery, saved the lives and property of several guests at the hotel.

Before the end of that summer Mr. Gilroy became so attached to the girls that he invited them to visit with him the Rocky Mountains the following summer. And so the girls of Dandelion Troop started with this well-read geologist and mineralogist for their host to tour the famous range in the West. The narrow escapes of Julie and Joan, in their zeal to get a hundred per cent of fun out of that life in the Rockies, provided thrills enough to last their friends at home many a day thereafter. The *Elmertown Record*, an up and coming weekly newspaper in the slow and sleepy little Jersey town, printed in its columns all the varied experiences of the *Girl Scouts in the Rockies*. And paid the girls for this contribution of their literary efforts, too!

Through the items read in the *Record*, other girls in Elmertown insisted upon joining the Scout Organization, and finally there were a number of flourishing Troops in the town. Enough, at least, to rouse the parents of the scouts to a sense of the importance of scoutdom.

The next summer Mr. Gilroy notified the scouts that he had to travel over New Mexico and Arizona in search of specimens of ancient deposits for the National Museum, and he invited the girls to ac-

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company him during this trip. Gladly they accepted the wonderful invitation; and that summer found them enjoying all kinds of novel experiences—mesas, deserts, Indian Reservations, petrified forests, Grand Canyon, and other thrilling interests such as only New Mexico and Arizona can provide. So this was the substance of the fourth book, *Girl Scouts in New Mexico and Arizona*.

Then followed the fifth book, *Girl Scouts in the Redwoods*; when the girls were the wards of Mr. Vernon, a lumber dealer, who had planned to attend the Convention in California. Mr. Gilroy refused to be left at home, so he joined his friend, Vernon, and all sailed from New York to the Panama Canal; through that to the Pacific Ocean, and then on to San Francisco. Not the least amusing experience afforded them that summer was the time Gilly tried to overpower a number of supposed outlaws in the woods near Lake Tahoe, and succeeded in being filmed in the foreground of a picture, which was being photographed by the camera, that was screened by the bushes on the opposite side of the woodland road. This scene led to the offer to the girl scouts of the contract to produce a serial picture featuring the Girl Scouts of America. As this was the heart's desire of every scout it was hailed as a direct gift

from a wise Providence. And of course it was gladly accepted.

So now, in the sixth volume of their experiences, the Dandelioners are on their way to Hollywood, anticipating with great excitement all the wonderful things they will see and have to act and to do before their picture can be released to an impatient public.

As they were driven rapidly over a good hard road in the direction of Mentone, the scouts in the first car were jotting down notes of certain amusing incidents in their summer excursions to the mountains, to be used for "Stills."

"We want to crowd in all the comedy we can remember," was Julie's suggestion; "because I notice that pictures with plenty of good, wholesome laughs in them make big hits with the public. It's all right to show our hair-breadth escapes, such as that canoe trip down the rapids, and riding across the desert in the face of a sandstorm, and getting lost on top of a Rocky Mountain peak, and such like, but we must always sprinkle enough laughter over all to make a palatable seasoning."

"Julie's right," declared Joan. "Just compare the two Chaplin's pictures, or some of the other comedians' productions, to the classy ones with fine names. Mary Pickford and Chaplins and Lloyd

draw millions, whereas the other kind draw thousands. *We* want to draw the Billions."

"And so she shall,—the nice littly dirl stout!" said Faxy, in a teasing voice, and with a babyish accent.

"Whose a little stout? Not me, I'll have you know!" exclaimed Joan, pretending to be furious at the intimation.

"No, Faxy; Jo's neither stout nor nice, as you say," was Julie's quick rejoinder.

"Oh, Julie! We all think Jo is as nice as she can be," was Betty's shocked contradiction to her sister's words. "If you were half as nice, all the time, I wouldn't have to worry so much."

All but Julie laughed merrily, and Julie patted her twin sister on the head, and said condolingly, "I wish I were, if 'twere only to relieve your poor harassed mind of its worry over my short-comings. But I have so many other noble qualities, Betty, that it would be selfish if I took your share of virtues, too, you see."

Betty had to ponder this statement of her sister's and that kept her occupied for some time. The others in that merry group of tourists laughed uproariously at Julie's good opinion of herself.

"I wonder if there will be any chance of getting Miss Pringle to attend the movies the day our pic-

ture is shown in Elmertown," now asked Judith.

"Who is Miss Pringle? The name sounds intriguing," was Junior's reply.

"She is just as much so as her name suggests," said Joan.

Then Julie proceeded to tell the story about the doughnuts, which Betty had had to carry so carefully until she got on board the steamer. And how the disapproving old woman played a practical joke on them, of sending doughnuts at least two or three months old, hard enough to use for baseballs!

"No," decided Faxy at the end of the story, "such a woman would consent to be electrocuted before she'd go to see a picture of anything so worth while as girl scouts on an excursion."

"Then we shall have to get her there to witness our shocking appearance in public in riding breeches. And how we climbed over crags and cliffs in company with Gilly; and how we actually kept house in a tent, 'way up on the peaks, with no house to lock up around us at night, for gossips' sake," said Judith.

"It's the 'Miss Pringles' of the world that take the joy out of Nature," remarked Faxy, and the scouts agreed heartily with him.

It was unanimously voted to camp out that night,

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and get away early in the morning, to arrive in Los Angeles in ample time to go to Hollywood, and meet the officers of the Stellar Company, to discuss the forth-coming serial.

During the preparation of the Camp supper the absence of Tally, the Indian guide, was lamented, because Tally was a wonderful cook. Now he would be in Los Angeles, arranging for the trip Mr. Vernon and Mr. Gilroy planned to take during the time the Dandelioners were engaged in doing their first pictures of the summer in camp on Verny's Mountain.

CHAPTER II

THE MAGIC CITY

So keen was the general anticipation of the scouts, of the imminent thrills of motion picture life, that the drive in the morning to Los Angeles seemed three times the distance it was said to be. At last, however, the cars drove up to the offices of the Stellar Producing Company, and waited while the chaperon, Mrs. Vernon, with the girls and boys, got out. Then Mr. Gilroy, and Mr. Vernon, drove back to the city to secure hotel accommodations for the party.

The first thing that attracted the attention of the girls, as the cars turned and sped away, was the very forbidding wall which enclosed the Stellar City, to keep prying eyes from beholding such events as were none of their business.

Mrs. Vernon led the way for her soon-to-be screen-stars across the open space in front of an impressive iron gate, before which sat a stout prize-fighting guardian. Only the elect may enter there, and even the elect has to have a passing acquaint-

ance with the watchful guard—because he knows that his salary depends upon recognizing the talent that makes the Stellar Pictures so popular with the public.

The Scout Captain was not aware of the red tape to be unwound at the gates before one could gain admittance, so she merely bowed politely to the guard and was about to pass him by and lift the peculiar latch on the gate, when he suddenly dropped his daily paper and sprang to his feet. In another moment he had taken a second spring and stood between Mrs. Vernon and the gate.

“No one is allowed within, Madame. Not unless you is connected with the pikshers, or with the management. Sorry, but them is my orders, yuh know, and I has to stick to 'em,” said the man.

“Oh, I see,” remarked the Captain. “I didn’t know we had to have passports to get in; we are supposed to do a picture of scout life, and I expected to find some one here who could direct me around.”

The guard stared doubtfully at the speaker, and then at the group of young folks with her. But he had not been convinced that Mrs. Vernon told the truth. “Yuh see, lots of tourists come here with all sorts of yarns to get by me, and you’s look a hull

lot like tourists. And one kin tell you'se ain't actors."

"But we are going to be," declared Julie, stepping up beside the Captain.

"We have our contracts already signed," added Joan.

The man shook his big fat head and answered: "Got a pass? That's the only contrack what will get you in now."

Just about this time a most amazing car drove up to the gates, and a gorgeously arrayed young woman leaned forward and nodded to the gatekeeper. In another moment he had bounded forward and opened the gates. As the car rolled through the wide open entrance the girls had a good view of the long street with the "sets" on both sides, where they felt sure different wonderful acts were being screened. And here they were without the charmed city, wondering how they might wheedle this great big fighter to allow them to go inside.

"Yuh all might go to the studio offices and see if they has any orders to let you'se pass in. Ef they has I kin do it; but not unless they O.K.'s your passin'," said the guard, his heart apparently softened by the disappointed looks of the girls.

"Where is the studio?" asked Mrs. Vernon.

"It's over there, where the general waiting room is for all the extrys who wants a part, and hasn't got it. Ez yuh goes in the first room you'll see a sign over a winder, and over it says 'Casting Director'. You'se kin ast in there if you has a passport filed away for your crowd."

The scouts thanked him and turned to hurry after Faxy and the Captain. No time was to be lost this way, before entering the City and beginning to arrange things for their picture!

In the waiting room they found many people seated on a wooden bench that lined the board walls. Some were young and pretty, some old and ugly. Others were neither one nor the other, but these had their individual claim for the screen: because each had a peculiarity that might be needed in certain character parts.

Faxy marched bravely up to the window and made his wants and wishes known to a shrewd man who seemed to look right through him with gimlet eyes. Apparently he had heard nothing of the famous Girl Scouts of Dandelion Troop, who were about to startle the world by their talented acting before the camera. Faxy wilted in his zeal to secure passes for his friends, and then the Cap-

tain joined him and explained how Mr. Rex Hamilton and other stars had attended to all the preliminary matters for them, and they were told to report here—at the Stellar City—that very day.

“Rex Hamilton! Oh, why didn’t you say so before. If he is expecting you, I’ll just send a page out for him. He is to be on a big act to-day, but he will not be called until after noon. Here, boy!” and the man in the office commanded an errand boy to go and page Hamilton.

“Be seated, ladies, while you are waiting. The boy may be gone an hour, or he may be back in a minute—never can tell.” Then the man seemed to think he was through with the scouts.

Well it was for their patience that the scouts had not to wait the hour. In fact, the boy couldn’t have gone thirty steps before he returned, followed by Rex Hamilton himself.

“Hullo, there! I was just going out to the garage for my car, to drive up the boulevard to meet you. I didn’t expect you to get here so early this morning,” said he, shaking hands with every one, but permitting his glance to rove to Judith’s face more than once during his greetings to the others.

“We’re early because we could not sleep last night for excitement. We had breakfast and broke

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camp, then travelled about 50-60 miles per, and here we are," explained Julie.

"The director who has charge of the scout work is not in to-day, but he left word with his secretary that you were to wander around wherever you chose in the Magic City, and become familiarized with things. He thought it would be a good thing if you studied the sets we use in making pictures, and then you won't be surprised, or show any concern, when you are doing your own pictures. How about it?" said Rex.

"That's just what we wanted to do, Rex, but we couldn't get inside," said Joan.

"Where's Sandy—and the other men?" asked Rex now, having just missed them from the group.

"Sandy won't be here until he finishes his work at the Forest Rangers Lookout; and Gilly went with V. to see about hotel rooms," explained Mrs. Vernon.

"Well, come with me; we'll see how much we can see before I have to go to work," said Rex. Then without any more "red tape" the entire group followed Rex through a side door that gave entrance to a long corridor with doors on both sides. These were the rooms, Rex explained, where all kinds of clerical work had to be attended to.

The clicking of typewriters attested this statement.

Finally they emerged in the open, and such a sight as they beheld! There was a central park of green grass edged with shrubs, and a sparkling fountain in the middle of it. From this central plaza were all kinds of streets radiating outward; but the one wide, main street, which had been seen from the outside of the gate, ran north and south to the extreme ends of the Lot. On both sides of this Main Street were the large, glass-roofed buildings which are so well known as "Movie Studios". Back and forth, and up and down this Main Street you could see actors hurrying, dressed in all kinds of costumes, all intent upon reaching their destinations for work. Also all kinds of workmen,—carpenters, painters, electricians, mechanics, scene shifters, and others needed in this vast industry,—mixed with the costumed actors, and made a marvelous picture in itself, for these strangers.

Rex Hamilton now led the scouts down this Main Street, in order to show them the outside of the studios first, and then let them wander around alone during the afternoon, to inspect the side streets with the sets on them.

It took some time to conduct the curious girls to the far end of Main Street, where the workshops

of the "trade-hands" were located. This was due to the many delays caused by the absorbed scouts in watching the various acts which were under way.

"Oh, girls!" called Joan, as they approached a stage, where a church scene was being done. Music provided by an unseen organ told the audience that there would be a wedding. So they just wanted to wait long enough to see the beautiful bride come in and march up to the altar, where a well-known screen star was the groom waiting to receive her.

"Look at this magnificent cathedral interior—and how it is made to make the movie fans believe it to be the real thing," laughed Julie, fully appreciating the cleverness and work that showed a slice of an edifice with open sides and front, and with the great Kleig lights directly overhead, or at places where they were needed.

The next cry of astonishment came from Betty. She stopped short in front of a millionaire's elegant home—in a great City,—or what was supposed to be that, if you might judge from the front view. There were most impressive stone steps leading up to wrought iron doors that opened to a beautiful vestibule, where green bay trees in large urns could be seen. Even as Betty exclaimed and her companions stopped to see what had attracted her attention,

the doors were opened by an obsequious servant, who bowed low before a beautiful young lady; she, chatting happily with a young admirer, passed through the vestibule and came down the steps right towards the scout group.

"Why," whispered Julie excitedly, "if it isn't Doria Swansdown. Look, Jo—your favorite screen actress!"

But Doria had no time for admirers of the outside world just then, because she was under the eye of her director, who was shouting to her through a megaphone, to have her do that scene again, just as he wanted it. Back went Doria and her admirer, and the scouts stood and gazed, and wondered where the couple would go when they reached the steps since Main Street was not a stage setting. Again came Doria and her partner; stopped; nodded questioningly at some one hidden behind a clump of foliage at the corner of the pretentious dwelling, and heaved a sigh of relief.

"Well, thank goodness!" ejaculated Doria's escort, "our exit satisfied him at last."

"Yes, but we've got to go back and try coming down those hall stairs again. He says you were too awkward for anything in that," laughed Miss Swansdown.

The two disappeared again through the vestibule doors, but no attentive butler was there to bow before them. Instead, he joined the two—his erstwhile mistress and her guest—and familiarly placed his hand upon Doria's shoulder, as the three went indoors together.

Joan laughed outright at Betty's shocked expression.

"I thought he was a man-servant, but he seems to be a very good friend," said Betty, evident surprise in her tones.

"If we had time," remarked Rex, enjoying the girls' delighted amazement at all they saw, "I'd like to take you to the rear of that elegant mansion and let you see the back of it—where the actors wait for a call, or where the off-stage people go, when they make an exit from the picture."

"I can show the girls around there after you leave us," added Faxy. "Now we want you to show us some of your Western sets. We'll find a lot there to interest us."

Soon after this, Rex led the way from Main Street into a narrow byway. Not an actor, nor a workman, could be seen down the entire length of this queer-looking street. Away off (so it seemed) was a sky painted upon a huge canvas scene, and

here the prairie seemed to stretch for miles and miles to right and to left. A dim purple mountain range was visible, where prairie and sky seemed to meet. Right in the foreground, however, where the scouts would have to halt were Indian tents, and imitation boulders, and sand and cacti.

"Do you know what this represents?" asked Rex smilingly.

"A western scene, naturally," returned Faxy.

"You'd better guess again," laughed Rex.

"Why, you don't mean to say that this is one of *our* desert scenes waiting for us?" exclaimed Julie doubtfully.

"That's what it was supposed to be, but I told the scene painters not to waste more time on it because the Dandelioners had an artist in the Troop that would tell them where to get off on this sort of landscape painting. So now they are waiting for Joan to sketch in all she remembers of the mesas and Painted Deserts of New Mexico and Arizona, where you camped."

"But, Rex, aren't we going to start from the very first and do the pictures of Dandelion Camp, before we jump to western life?" asked Julie anxiously.

"You never can tell where a director will jump

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you first or last, Julie," laughed Rex. "If they happen to have a western street, or a desert scene all rigged up for some other picture, they are apt to run your last reel of the story first. I get all mixed in the plot, and sometimes my brain whirls, trying to follow any kind of continuity in the acting."

"I suppose it saves a great deal of expense, by using the same, or similar sets, in this way, for different pictures," was Mrs. Vernon's remark.

"Oh, yes indeed! And time, too. Time is often one of the greatest values in a picture, you know. When we get a good story, we try to rush it out to get ahead of some other producer who might have a similar scenario on a popular theme for the time being," said Rex.

"Well, I certainly will give a few hints to that scenery artist regarding the mesas and other places we visited on our Southwestern tour," said Joan emphatically, as they turned away.

Down another side alley, which opened from Main Street, the girls heard voices and saw a number of costumed actors rushing from a huge canvas wall. "Want to stop a moment and see a swell gambling scene?" asked Rex.

"Oh, yes!" chorused the scouts as one voice. In

another moment they were nearing the large canvas wall, where the actors not wanted in that particular scene were grouped outside the opening of the wall, intently watching the proceedings within. Sounds of music reached the visitors, and soon they stood with the actors, gazing at the picture within.

From the outside only a bare ugly stretch of canvas had been seen. Once you got a glimpse within, how suddenly all had changed—or rather what a difference between the indoors' scene and the outside of that magic structure of canvas.

"What a lot of deception a pot of paint, and brushes wielded by a clever hand, will work!" said Faxy, as he compared notes.

"S—s—sh—don't talk! Watch the scene," warned Julie.

And there they were treated to one of the expensive scenes supposed to be the setting of a Monte Carlo gambling place. Gorgeously gowned women, decked with flashing jewels, ("rhinestones," whispered Rex, in Judy's ear,) carefully groomed men in evening dress, and crafty looking men, who presided at the gambling tables, drew the attention of the scouts first of all. Then, as they became familiar with the unusual scene of playing roulette, and other devices for gambling, the camouflaged

magnificent interior interested them. The marble columns, the sparkling chandeliers, the view into the next salon, where couples could be seen passing to and fro,—palms, orchestra, and all that goes to make up a luxurious, pleasure-seeking resort was here reproduced.

The time Rex had for his friends was almost spent, and he wanted to leave them where they might continue their inspection of the Magic City without him; so he carefully coached the Captain and Faxy as to the byways to follow, and scenes which they would be allowed to watch without being *de trop*. Faxy promised to steer clear of all forbidden places, and then Rex reluctantly said *au revoir* for the time being, and hurried away to his own set.

As luck would have it, the very next scene the scout party caught sight of was one just started. They asked a by-stander if it would be all right for them to watch proceedings, and were told it would, as it happened to be an outdoor scene. So they waited and watched.

"It must be a European picture," whispered Joan. "See the foreign-looking houses and the quaintly garbed people."

"It must be a native village in Italy," remarked

Mrs. Vernon. "I remember many just like this one, when I toured the country, after the War."

The man of whom they had asked permission to watch the scene, now vouchsafed some information to the scouts. "Yes, it is supposed to be a small country place in southern Italy, where the vineyards are the main source of livelihood. In a moment you will see a swell car drive down that narrow road, and stop at the old inn beside the spring. Here it comes now!"

The scouts craned their necks and were too absorbed now in watching the scene, which promised to be so interesting, to note the smile on the face of the man who had spoken to them.

"Oh, the driver of that classy car is Gene Breen!" exclaimed Faxy. "I knew him some years ago—long before he became a matinee idol in the *Country Cousin*."

"Watch him make love to the little girl at the Inn—the daughter of the simple Italian who owns the old tavern. I am familiar with the story, and I'm sure you will like this bit of it," spoke the man beside them.

At this moment the scouts heard a voice from some place hidden from view, bellow through a megaphone, "Hey there—do that entrance again.

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Wait until we get a pig and a few hens on the road, in front of the Inn. When your car speeds down and dashes up before the entrance to the hostelry, you must not heed the squawking of the chickens, or the mad scampering of the pig, as you scatter them right and left. Your very indifference to the dazed creatures is noted by the inn keeper,—but the girl is all eyes for you, even as you are for her. Understand—it is the girl, not what is in the way of the motor's advance, that claims your attention."

"I see!" returned Gene Breen. "Can't we take the love-scene under the vines, while the pig and hens are being brought?"

"Sure! go to it," shouted the director.

Now the girls saw Gene leave the high-powered car and go behind the Inn. The girl that had been standing just inside the doorway, waiting for her lover, disappeared. But in another moment the two were seen walking arm in arm toward the grape-arbor, where they sat down and seemed to be engrossed with each other. All the time, however, the director was bawling forth his directions, and changing the poses and love-making of the couple, until he thought he had it just right.

"I wouldn't care to be coached so publicly in my

love-scenes," laughed Julie, as poor Gene had to move and twist and squirm until his love-making pleased the director.

"And I'm sure here's one who wouldn't have it so," whispered Faxy, in her ear.

Julie turned and looked at him in a way that expressed the utmost amazement at his words. But Joan had heard and seen this little by-play, and laughingly remarked: "Sandy wouldn't care where or when he could get a chance to have a nice little tête-à-tête with the girl he likes. Wait until we do that scene of our Western stuff, where we cross the mountain range dividing Colorado from New Mexico!

"Remember that midnight ride of Sandy's,—down the trail to our camp?"

Julie remembered and laughed, but Faxy had not been one of that envied scout party, and he frowned at Joan's reminder of the event.

Finally the scout party found a set, which represented the interior of a large railway station in an Eastern city; then they stopped, for a time, to laugh at the way the cow-boy stunts were performed before the camera; had doubted their eyes to find how scenes in Chinatown were built up, to take in a gullible public; and had investigated the

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backs of the structures which looked so marvelous from the front.

The very fragility of the false walls, and houses, and street-scenes—even mountain peaks—as shown by the skeleton framework used to bolster up the canvas interiors, or the painted scenes, made the scouts marvel. Only thin lath, plaster, and scantlings were the mainstay of such marvels.

"Well, when you girls are through looking over this part of Magic City, I will be ready for something to eat," hinted Mrs. Vernon.

"That reminds me, Captain," said Faxy, "Gilly and V. have not shown up. Where can they be?"

"Most likely taking a much needed nap at the hotel," laughed Julie.

"Or going the rounds of Main Street, looking for us," was Betty's remark.

"No, not looking for us, but looking at the stars that are such an attraction for shy elderly men who are alone or lost," laughed Mrs. Vernon.

"After we reach our hotel I must sit down and write a letter to the *Elemertown Record*, and tell all about this first real visit to the inside of a Motion Picture City," said Julie.

"It truly was a *reel* visit," said Joan, laughingly.

"We might as well be going then,—Julie's letters

mean several hours' work. And she needs 'nourishment' before she starts so arduous a duty," said the Captain. Therefore they started for the offices where they would leave a note for Rex, to let him know they would telephone him later, to give him the address of the hotel where they could be found.

But they had not concluded the note for Rex, before Mr. Gilroy came in from the street entrance. He crossed the long waiting room and joined the scout party.

"Feel worried over our absence?" asked he smilingly.

"Never had a moment's time in which to think of you," retorted the Captain, winking at the girls.

"We had concluded that V. and you were sitting in one of the front rows over at Doria Swansdown's stage," laughed Julie.

"Well, well! if we had known she was to be here to-day, nothing could have kept us away from that front row," said Mr. Gilroy.

"Too late for regrets now," said Faxy, "She's gone home."

"I had a fine rest, and I thought I would spend the evening here watching night scenes with the Stellar Stars. Nothing like a Star-filled night, you know," suggested Mr. Gilroy.

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All but Betty knew he was jesting, but she replied: "Oh, Gilly! They might not like it, you know. *We* had to ask permission to stop and peep in at Monte Carlo. And that was in daylight, too!"

"Really, Betty? I wonder they consented to have outsiders peeping in at Monte Carlo. Didn't they think you were detectives in disguise?" replied Gilly, very seriously.

"They never asked us, so I don't know," returned Betty. But her companions were laughing, and she wondered if Gilly had meant what he said.

After the name of the hotel, where Mr. Gilroy had taken rooms for the scouts, had been affixed to the note for Rex, they went out and started back to town.

CHAPTER III

JULIE'S LETTER HOME

THE Dandelioners were too tired after their sight-seeing in the Magic City to pay much attention to the residences of famous screen stars. And when they stopped in front of the hotel in Los Angeles it was with a feeling of relief that they realized they could rest after such a full day.

"Don't any one ask me to do a thing before I get that letter off to the *Record*," was Julie's command, as she discovered the writing room, a short distance down the corridor from the hotel office.

No one had pep enough to answer her, so off she went. In a short time she was engaged in writing her gossip about the Magic City and all the marvels to be seen there.

"Dear Editor:

"Of course you are expecting this story from my pen for the weekly news' item two weeks from now, and I am going to tell the Elmertown folks such truths as will make their next visit to the Movies an eye-opener. Some of the tricks they do

here to make folks believe the stars do hair-raising stunts are too clever for words, but I shall try to describe some of them to you.

"We learned a lot about the work, considering the short time we have been here. When you stop to think that we only entered Stellar Lot this morning, and here I am describing all we discovered in one day, you too, will say that we are speed artists.

"The first lesson we learned were certain technical facts of filmdom that everyone ought to know. Then we learned some more.

"There are sixteen exposures of camera to a foot of film—think of that! The camera snaps sixteen different pictures to one foot of jelly strip! And they run sixty feet of film in one minute. Can you get that? If you do, you can understand how it is that, snapping nine hundred and sixty shots every minute, we can sit before a screen and fancy the actor is moving and doing things in a perfectly normal natural manner, that is, if the camera-crank is turned properly—neither too slow nor too fast.

"But we also found out that, in case they need quicker action, or slower motion, the camera-man—the one who turns the crank in the theatre,—can do so by turning off the reel slower or faster.

"In a five reel picture one hour is necessary to run it off properly. But that is not saying that only one hour is necessary to make that five reels! Some scenarios take months, to be pictured right here on the Lot. (I forgot to tell you that 'Lot' is the name for a picture company's enclosed property for studio work.)

"The next step we learned about the working out of pictures was that the director seldom uses any titles to the pictures, and only a few of the actors in the play know the continuity of the scenario. The director bawls any old thing through the megaphone he uses, so as to make the actors hear him—there is so much racket going on. The machinery whirring, the electricians constantly moving lights or screens or shades, the groups talking, the property men pushing, or pulling furniture and things about! it's just awful, if you want to have anyone hear you speak in a natural tone.

"We are going to visit the editing offices to-morrow, where all the titles, sub-titles, script, and other writing is made up for use when the picture is produced to the public. We were told that the less text a picture has for the public to read the better it is, and the more popular it becomes. Isn't that funny? Now with the *Record*, the more writing

you crowd in your paper the better the readers like it!

"Rex Hamilton—he is the famous actor I told you about in a previous article, you know—says every picture has to introduce contrasts; there must be humor and pathos; thrills and calms; originality and sameness; scenery both high and low; action and 'still life'—that is inaction—and so forth.

"In photoplay parlance you use terms such as these: scenario; synopsis; condensed synopsis; continuity; studio locale is made up geography with scene paintings and other tricks, to be used in the studio, whether it be an interior or an exterior scene. Locale of outdoors, is a picture taken from nature—from the out-of-doors itself.

"Condensed synopsis has from three hundred and fifty to four hundred and fifty words to present a complete idea. A synopsis has about six hundred and fifty words to a reel. But *all* the words in a synopsis have to mean action, you know. They never use articles or conjunctions. A scenario writer merely uses a dash when he wants to supply English grammar in a story. One needs to have a lot of intelligent imagination to read a scenario in dash terms, and make a continuity of it!

"The cast sheet means the number and kind of characters needed for the picture.

"A cut-in means where one scene cuts into another. But you at Elmertown Theatre think a 'cut-in' means something different. We used to think that a lot of the original scenes of the whole picture were cut out, in order to shorten the run of the film, to permit the camera man to get away from his job earlier than he would be able to do were he to run the whole film.

" 'Vision' is a term used to signify a cut-in, when used to accent certain ideas,—such as a warning, or a dream.

" 'Bust' is the enlarged view of a scene on the screen, or a certain detail in that scene.

"A 'close-up' is the trick of bringing the picture close, or rather moving the camera closer, to the scene, to present a magnified view of it.

"The 'theme' is the subject, or thread of the story.

"When using the term 'locale', in a general way, it signifies any scenes, or surrounding scenery, where pictures are to be taken.

" 'Title' is the name of the photoplay, as we all know.

" 'Leader' means the words thrown on the screen to explain a scene, the lapse of time, a message, a

telegram, a letter, or a communication, and anything that is necessary to explain to the audience. The shorter a leader is the better it is. Leaders should never have over twenty words in length.

"The word 'discovered' means the scene and actors in the picture when it is revealed to the eye. 'Enter' means to come in the picture; 'exit' means get out, or when something is gotten out of the scene. 'Bus.' is the abbreviation for 'business,' which means that of doing something; an action, such as taking up an article, or shaking hands, or gesticulating with hands, or talking, laughing, etc.

"'Up-stage' doesn't mean an over-bearing or snippy person, such as we interpret it in Elmertown; but here in Hollywood it stands for 'away from the camera'. 'Down-stage' means towards the camera.

"The single letter 'R' always stands for 'right'. And 'L' means 'left', on the stage.

"Now here is something I don't want you to misinterpret, because you ought to know by this time that I never use strong language. I mean the letters 'D.F.' They simply mean 'door in flat'. And D.R.F. signifies right door of flat, or that portion which faces the camera.

"'Set' means scenery, or property, in scene to be snapped, whether it be artificial or natural. In

speaking of a parlor scene in the movies, the folks here call it 'parlor set'. A 'wood set' means a woodland scene.

"A single reel has one thousand feet of film. And each picture filmed uses about an inch of film. In one reel there are about 12,000 individual pictures.

"A vision is made by double exposure on a regular scene.

"Well, now that all these stagey names are off my mind, I can go on and tell my story without stopping to explain them here and there.

"When we arrived in Los Angeles to-day, Uncle Gilly asked whether we thought we could stand going straight on to the Stellar City, or go to the hotel first. We unanimously voted for the City, so V. and he drove us there, and then they went back alone in the cars to attend to our baggage and rooms at the hotel.

"We had a little delay in getting in, because Rex Hamilton was not at hand. But he soon came in and escorted us about the place. In the long waiting-room, where we stopped for a short time, sat long-faced people, all waiting for a 'call'. To use screen slang, when a mob scene is necessary the casting directors look up all the extras they can get, to go at once to the stage, where the 'shooting' is

to be done. 'Shooting' does not mean that a gun is necessary, but the camera is, because it is that weapon which shoots the pictures. I'm most thankful that we will not have to take our place with these forlorn 'waiters'. Some of them look so hungry and bedraggled, as though they have been waiting to be 'shot' for many months, yet never got in good range for the shooting.

"There is a big cafeteria on the Lot, where all the working actors go for their meals. We haven't had an opportunity to sample the food yet, but we hope to be among those present to-morrow, and thereafter.

"You should see a bar-room scene as we witnessed it to-day. Guess how many times the villain of the story had to try to kidnap the innocent young maiden from the far-off ranch? When you see the picture from the front of the screen, in a theatre, you see lovely little Charity Jones running up a back stairs to escape the hated grasp of the black-haired, fierce-looking outlaw. The next moment you see her leaning over the rail on the stair-landing and telling how she will throw herself from the second story window rather than have his crime-stained fingers touch a hair of her angel-head.

"The old sinner merely snickers at this, and up

the stairs he goes after her. Then you see her climbing through the open window and from the interior of the bar-room scene you see her perching upon the sill outside. And you see her leap just before the villain tries to grab her. But you now see the exterior of the set. And you see the sweet girl come leaping down to a stony-hearted and dangerous earth. She must have hit pretty hard, because her form remains inert for a second. Then the picture switches back to the horrified expression on the outlaw's face, and you see the men in the bar-room threaten the rascal's life because of what has taken place.

"The picture switches back to the poor girl on the ground. Now she is trying to lift her head, or get up on her feet. But right here let me tell you: The girl jumped, 'tis true, but then she stood out on the window ledge, and it was but three feet from the floor. You could not tell that, because the bottom of the film cut off your view of all that might be seen below that window line. When the picture was 'cut,'—from the threat scene, to the jump scene,—you saw the outlaw about to grasp the girl. There the scene was cut, and you saw something jump—or to be correct, it was sprung by unseen wires, from the window to the ground. It was a

dummy that hit the earth so hard and remained inert. How could it kick or writhe with pain, when it was only a bunch of clothes?

"While the inside scene showed you the loungers threatening the outlaw, the live actress took her place upon the ground, and when the scene cut back to her, there she was trying to lift her dazed head. This scene was acted a dozen times before the dummy form was landed just right in the picture, to make it seem as if the girl had jumped. Another scene, that had to be done again and again, was that one where all the loungers in the bar-room rushed outside to stand around the outlaw and the maiden. The director almost had hysteria while trying to make the 'extras' understand what they must do. It all seemed so simple that I wondered why the actors could not understand what was expected of them. Rex says that when *one* does it right, the other does it all wrong. And it needs repeated coachings to grind it into all heads alike.

"Do you know how they work those neck-breaking scenes, where the actors walk on a sky-scraper and balance so daringly out on the edge of the coping? Where one, at those awful heights, will hang over with only his toes clinging to the ledge, and his

hands clutching a gradually loosening window shade? Well, you should see the *reel* thing done out here.

"The acrobatic star doesn't have to be much of a stunt-worker. All he needs is to be clever enough to see to it that his body is not obstructing the views of the street scenes and the edges of the skyscraper below and beyond him. These scenes were made before he tries his stunt. And now he is producing another exposure on the same film. He stands upon an imitation ledge, which is about a foot or eighteen inches above the floor—just above the line where the lowest possible view in the camera can reproduce the scene. When Carrol Floyd was trying out some stunts for a new picture, we almost fainted to see how his hair-raising deeds were 'reely' done. Why, there actually was a spring mattress upon the floor under a four foot drop—in case he missed and fell, which he didn't!

"How do you suppose they produce huge billows for a storm at sea? Why, they have a great tank built upon a high scaffold, and into this the water pours from a water-hydrant, or reservoir. A large pool stands upon the ground below the tank where the ship is supposed to sail. A big propeller is located close to the pool, but out of range of the

camera. When it is time for the gale to blow up, and the waves to rise high above the ship-side, the large propeller revolves fast enough to produce a terrific wind, and the waves are made by having the water from the high tank flood down into the pool. If a boat, or a ship, is expected to wreck itself during the awful storm at sea, some men are made to use ropes which are attached to that side of the vessel which is out of sight of the camera. And the tugging of these ropes makes the craft rock dangerously.

"Rex explained how a wonderful invention by Frank Williams has simplified the work in pictures. It is patented and known as the 'Frank Williams' Mat Process.' The moving actors in one picture are fitted into a moving background of another picture. Both are accurately fitted into place so that when produced on the screen it seems as though actors and scene are one and taken at the same time. We were shown how it is possible without risk of life, or loss of time and money, to take pictures by means of this process, which used to be impossible. Scenes of earthquakes, explosions, wild animals, fires and floods, can be utilized now for movie stunts and thrillers.

"It is really a trick in the printing of the films,

rather than the work of the camera. The negatives used for the Williams' process are shot by the camera man just as any ordinary scene is shot. Later the manner and methods of combining the actors' work with the thriller episode are done in the laboratory.

"The process, or 'Williams' Mat' is composed of three parts: a miniature picture four feet high, placed six feet in front of the camera; the section of the picture where the action goes on is about eighty feet from the camera; the *painted* scene, or background, is a few feet further away. In the long shots, or distant views, the whole combination is convincing.

"Black velvet backgrounds are used to produce the pictures of the moving actors. Close-ups are made of the miniatures, and the two parts—the actors and the photographed miniatures—are fitted together. Sometimes the pictures have to be taken dozens of times before the two will fit exactly in place. However, Rex says, experience will work wonders in this line, so that actors will be able to time their work to the second, and thus have the action fit neatly into place in the moving scenes.

"Rex told us how the Red Sea was made in the 'Ten Commandments'. They built huge wooden

frames, or walls, and covered them with a jelly sort of substance that was composed of silicate of soda and sulphuric acid. This shimmered and vibrated so that in the photographing it looked like water. Painted marine scenes on canvas—breaking waves and far distant shores—were set at the sides and at the back of the large bodies of imitation water, and carried out the impression of the real ocean.

“Another surprise in store for us, and for any one who is a novice to a Magic City and how it works, was the way the actors make up. All the ‘extras’, I mean. The stars have their own exclusive rooms, of course; and their maids, or valets, attend to their make-up. But the extras scramble for the stools placed in a line before a shelf-like table, which is fastened against the wall. Above the table is a long mirror, running the full length of the table. At the back of the table, against the wall, are small powder boxes, brushes and combs, all carefully secured by chains to the table. Even so, we were told, the chains would be broken and the articles would disappear. A number of the extras bring their own toilet articles, and they have to sit upon them, when not using them, or some one will swoop over and grab whatever is needed. The men and

women who have to assist with the make-ups of extras, also have charge of the costumes for the character scenes. If it is to be a Chinese picture, they have to use their best judgment as to sizes for the different heights and breadths of the persons to be dressed.

"The warehouse, where 'property' is stored until a call comes for any particular piece, or for entire sets of furniture, is a genuine curiosity shop. Such a conglomeration of washtubs, vases, family portraits, kitchen chairs and elegant period furniture you never dreamed of! And everything in the vast storage place, from a silk Kermansha rug, to a bit of dirty rag carpet, was tagged and numbered, and each in its own place, as though it was charged for that individual space. In fact, you might compare this warehouse with its thousands of items of stuff, to the scenario department, with its numerous pigeon holes, all arranged in alphabetical order.

"In the scenario offices it is this way: every scenario submitted to the editorial staff is read for ideas. If there are any new or original ideas to be had in it, a memo is made of that fact. The editors, whose work it is to use every original, or good idea, in submitted scenarios, and make type copies of such ideas, label them for the pigeon holes, where they

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are to be kept until a call for them comes. For instance, Egyptian ideas are put in a pigeon hole under the general heading of 'Egypt'. Here there are more definite compartments under the headings of 'Nile; Pharaohs; ancient time'; and so forth. If it happens to be a war story, any useful information in the scenario is copied and pigeon-holed under the heading of 'War'. And under this general heading there are many kinds of wars to be found. The Mexican War; Revolution; Civil War; Spanish-American; World War, and so forth. In time of need they draw from these pigeon holes.

"I think this is about all I have to tell you of our first day in the Magic City, but I will not forget my duty to Elmertown, and you may rest assured I will keep you posted with the news of your favorite stars."

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST TRY-OUT

THAT night, at the hotel in Los Angeles, the scouts learned that the Hendersons and Fairfaxes planned to leave the city in the morning.

"Oh," cried Joan, "I thought we would have Faxy and Junior and Hendy with us in the pictures."

"How could we, when we are not girl scouts?" retorted Faxy.

"But we could use you in our scenes, and it would be far nicer to have boys we know, to act with us, instead of extras who might be goodness knows who," declared Judith.

"I'm sure you boys would make splendid ex-convicts to picture in that scene where I get biffed over the head in the cave, and the girls find me in time to save my life," said Mr. Gilroy.

"And then there is the part for them to play while we are in the Adirondacks; and the Indian Guides in the Rockies; and the beaux we had in the southwestern trip. They would fit in so nicely," added one of the other girls.

"At the same time, we fathers find our sons will fit in far better in certain business plans they had made before they met the Dandelioners. And those plans have to be carried out now, even if such plans prevent the boys from becoming movie stars," said Mr. Fairfax.

"Well, thank goodness, we shall have Rex and Sandy left to us, in case we languish for attention," sighed Joan.

"Don't I count in that scheme?" demanded Gilly.

"And how about the cashier for the Captain?" asked V.

"Oh, you two! You are all right anywhere, but we do not think of you as escorts," returned Julie.

"There, Gilly! What did I tell you? We two are simply *de trop* because of age," was Mr. Vernon's complaint, to his friend.

"And yet one would think that our white hair ought to inspire these girls with more reverence," sighed Mr. Gilroy.

"If our reverence for you depended upon your sartorial growth, Gilly," retorted Julie, "it wouldn't amount to very much."

A general laugh greeted this remark, because Mr. Gilroy's hair was noticeable because of its scarcity. The shining pink dome on the top of his head being

very apparent through the carefully combed wisps of hair.

"Now, then, after that, I shall not hesitate a moment longer, V., to announce my decision," declared Gilly.

"And hearing how nicely the Troop can live and pay its bills without me, I shall accept my friends' invitation to accompany them to the southern part of the state to visit certain lumber tracts," added Mr. Vernon.

The girls were certainly surprised at this, and stared at their Captain to see what she would say to such news. She must have known what was coming, for she smiled at the scouts but said nothing.

"If you go with the Hendersons and Fairfaxes, V., how long will you be absent from us?" asked Betty.

"You seem to be the only one in the entire party, Betty, who will miss our company," said Mr. Gilroy, pretending to be sad over such a state of affairs.

"Oh, we all will miss you, Gilly, because you always help out in cases of emergency, you know. I shall never forget how useful you happened to be the time the taxi cab drove away with the box of doughnuts," explained Betty.

"I see! It is only because of my usefulness as a

handy man that I am welcome in this Troop!" was Gilly's jeering answer. "And I flattered myself that it was because of true friendship."

Of course the scouts laughed, and Betty thought they were most inconsiderate,—to laugh as though they lacked any sense of obligation toward poor Gilly!

At this point a bell-hop entered the parlor and called Mr. Vernon to the long distance telephone. This changed the trend of the conversation. When V. returned he had definite news for them.

"I heard from that owner down in the southern peninsula," he said, as he addressed Mr. Henderson and Mr. Fairfax, "and he expects us there this week. He has had one offer for his standing timber, but says he will wait for us to decide, before he takes any steps in closing the sale."

"We ought to be starting in the morning then," said Mr. Henderson.

"And we ought to leave our families here, where they will be comfortable until our return," suggested Mr. Fairfax.

"How long will you be absent?" inquired Mrs. Fairfax.

"About ten days, to two weeks," replied her husband.

"Well, we can amuse ourselves nicely for that time, and then go on with you when you come back."

"Will you leave your boys here for that time, if we will promise to deliver them safe and sound to your hands in two weeks?" asked Julie eagerly.

"If you want to hear the truth, friends," began Mr. Vernon, "I don't know what we would do with them, where we are going to be for two weeks. They would be extra baggage—in the way of our traveling light."

"Hurrah! I don't mind being checked and left in storage with the Dandelioners for the ten days," laughed Faxy.

"Nor I!" added Junior. "It's a lot more fun playing parts to your scout picture, than following Dad around to stare at big trees."

Julie suddenly seemed to have an inspiration, but she said nothing about it. She merely changed the subject of pictures to one of their recent experiences in the Groves of Big Trees.

That night Mr. Vernon packed his grip and was ready to leave on an early train. Gilly also decided to accompany the men and see if he might discover any unusual specimen of rock for his collections.

Therefore the scouts found quite a break in their circle when they met at breakfast in the morning.

"But it would have been much lonelier if the boys had gone too," remarked Betty.

"Now we must make the most of the time in which we have the boys still with us," said Joan. "Only two weeks!"

"I thought of something very important last night," now said Julie; "it has to do with the boys and the work we ought to do first. I shall have to speak to our director about it, as soon as we arrive at the Stellar City."

"I'm ready to start now," announced Joan.

"If you are all through with breakfast, we might start without further delay," suggested Mrs. Vernon.

So the Troop were soon settled in the two automobiles, and the boys drove away in the direction of Hollywood.

Rex met them just outside the entrance gates, where he had arrived a few moments before the scouts. "I've got some good news for you to-day. The assistant director got a telephone message last night from his superior, and he is to try out you girls to-day, to see how you behave. I knew you would be thrilled to know."

"We are; but I want awfully to have a business talk with that director, Rex, about a matter of great importance to him," returned Julie.

"Won't his first assistant do? Then he can report to his boss, when he 'phones again," asked Rex.

"Well, I suppose *he* will have to do, since I can't see the head man," agreed Julie, doubtfully. The others had followed Rex and Julie, and now all arrived at the offices, where Mr. Alsop had his quarters. There they would find Mr. Berger, the assistant director.

Rex ushered Julie in to interview the director, while the other scouts walked on down the corridor towards the door that opened to the Lot.

Inside the office Julie lost no time in a preamble. She spoke at once of the object of her visit. "I was thinking last night, Mr. Berger, that the company ought to film the pictures of our experiences this season, while we have the boys with us who were in our party in the mountains. You see, we now have young Fairfax, the two Henderson boys, and Rex Hamilton; and Tom Sanderson, due to arrive to-morrow. These boys know all about the stunts we did this summer, and they will need no coaching. But they will only be with us two weeks, then they go East again with their parents."

Mr. Berger thought this suggestion very good,

and he now asked: "But will the boys agree to work in the pictures, as you suggest?"

"Oh, they will be delighted, if it can be done before they leave," responded Julie eagerly.

"Will they expect more pay than our extras are given?" was Berger's next query.

"Why, they will not expect *any* salary," said Julie, "and that's another point in your favor."

"I think you have a very shrewd business head, for so young a lady, Miss Lee," now said the director admiringly.

"I ought to have!" retorted Julie. "I've been a self-supporting girl scout for the past four years now, and that is good training for business, I can tell you."

"Well, I'll get Alsop on the 'phone at once, and see what he says. If he agrees with us we will go to it at once, on the lines you suggested," said Berger, as he opened the door for his visitor to go out.

"You'll be along, after that, eh?" asked Julie, before she started down the hall.

"Yes, immediately. You can tell your party to go to Stage Number 6, where I am going to try out a few snaps to see how you all photograph."

So Julie ran away, delighted with the outcome of

her interview. She joined the other members of the Troop a short distance from the office building, and then she confided her plan to them. It mattered little to the other scouts, however, which picture came first, just so *a* picture was started.

Not long after the Troop reached Stage Number 6, they saw Mr. Berger walking hurriedly towards them. His face expressed satisfaction and the girls knew that his telephone conversation had been agreeable for their plans.

"Well, my friends, Mr. Alsop thinks Miss Lee's plan a very practical one, so we will start work on the Redwoods' experiences, as soon as you are coached sufficiently for the camera work," said he.

"Oh," exclaimed Betty in a disappointed tone, "aren't we going to start at the very beginning, with the digging up of the dandelion roots for the money to pay for our summer camp?"

"When the picture is shown to the public it will begin at your first stunts as girl scouts; but now we have to get in some work while the characters are to be had," explained Mr. Berger.

He led the way to one side of the scene on Stage 6, and then stopped. "I don't suppose you scouts brought any uniforms to-day, but it really doesn't matter much for this try-out. When we

begin to run the regular stuff, you must be decked out as you are on your camping trips. I'll supply all the tents and outfits—but we haven't anything that even looks like a girl scout uniform in the shop."

As he spoke, he posed Julie and Joan in the foreground, then he arranged the other girls back and on both sides of the two who were to be the stars in the serial. The Captain was to be given special favor—she would be photographed alone, in different poses.

"How about us boys—aren't we coming in for any of that free picturing business?" teased Faxy, as he did his best to make the girls relax their frozen facial expressions and laugh at his antics.

"You won't even be in one of our films unless you keep quite now," threatened Mr. Barger good-naturedly. Meantime, he was looking over the group, first with his head on one side, and then on the other; finally he said, "There now! hold that, and we'll see."

There was a queer clicking, a whirring, and a bright flash of light. Then the camera began grinding and the first "still" was taken.

"Now we will try another way, in a different light. I want to get each scout in all the lights and

shadows I can, to see just what touching up each one will need to show up well in the finished product," explained Berger.

Another pose and another "Hold it!" and another still had been registered upon a plate.

"Now we will try a little action, and see how you girls rise to that test," said Berger, and he began telling them of a few mild little stunts he hoped they could accomplish for that day.

"It's baby-play for us," remarked Judith.

"By the time you have seen some of the narrow escapes we had in real life, you'll begin to think you have a Troop of Reel Hazards to work with," giggled Joan.

"The more hair raising the better," said Berger. "If you scouts can produce genuine thrillers, as you say you can, you need never worry again over self-support. Miss Lee says that is where she got her experience in business."

Everyone looked at Julie in surprise. "No, Mr. Berger didn't repeat it exactly as I said it: when he said I had a good business head on my shoulders, I told him that I got all my experience in being a self-supporting scout. It is very different, you see."

Mr. Berger seemed more than gratified at the re-

sult of the action work of the scouts, and then he dared to go further.

"I wonder if the boys about to act with you now, will show up as well in their work?"

"Never can tell till you try us," retorted Faxy. "Come on, boys."

"Wait a little moment," advised Mr. Berger. "Now what shall we choose to do in this one? A little love scene, or some wild adventure?"

"Oh, don't drag a love scene in so early in the day," said Julie. "Besides, who could register romance and love with such a crowd at hand to laugh at every soft look I'd send my beau."

The others laughed, and the Captain said, "I think my girls prefer adventure of the most thrilling kind, Mr. Berger."

"Fine! Now let's see what scenes we have ready staged that I could use for a try-out?"

"The big pool that's made for that ship-wreck, isn't being used to-day. The comp'ny's workin' on a swell Fift' Avenoo interior for the ballroom scene now," spoke up one of the trade jacks.

"Is there any stunt you scouts remember doing where there was a large body of water?" asked Berger.

"Is there! Well, we'll say so!" laughed Julie.

And Joan instantly added: "You can't pump enough water through that tank to make it look like the real river did, the day Julie and I shot the rapids in that Rocky Mountain torrent. Was *that* a hair-raiser?"

The other girls laughed; and the boys smiled sympathetically, for they had heard all about that daring feat of the two girls.

"At least let us try and see what can be done that way, if you young ladies are willing to get wet," returned Mr. Berger.

"I should much prefer they could wait until they are in scout uniform. Such a soaking as will be necessary will not be desirable, especially as we have to drive back to the hotel in these dresses," interposed Mrs. Vernon.

"Then we've got to think up some other stunt. What else have we ready to use?" Mr. Berger asked of his workmen.

"There's an old log cabin, what the ranchero used for a western picture yesterday," said one.

"Oh," exclaimed Betty eagerly. "Do let's play the time Julie and Jo caught the convicts back of the cabin and we smoked them out."

"That's a new one for me," laughed Mr. Berger. "I didn't know girl scouts ever smoked. Of course, all the females out here do, and the women in so-

ciety everywhere, smoke to beat the band, these days, but I was told the scouts *never* did."

"Oh! we don't!" cried Betty. "You misunderstood me. I was thinking of how we started a damp wood, smudge fire in the chimney we had built; and how the smoke that escaped from the back of it did the trick for us."

"The convicts couldn't stand the fumigation," laughed Joan.

"Oh, I see! Well, I hope you will excuse my blunder," was Mr. Berger's apology.

"But getting back to business," said Julie, "I think it will work out fine, to have that log cabin picture tried out."

"Very well; we'll have to go on to Stage 9, for that," said Mr. Berger. He gave some orders to the camera man and the other helpers with him, and then they all started for Stage Number 9.

Here was the front of a log cabin, such as Mrs. Vernon and her friends had built in their girlhood days. The scouts were delighted with its appearance; but, upon inspection, they saw it was very much unlike that staunch little structure in the Jersey Hills, that had withstood so many years of wind and weather. This one had imitation log walls and imitation stone chimney, and imitation

everything else which could be imitated, to appear like the real thing in a picture.

"Now, you girls suggest the action and I will look on and criticize, if I think something will not look right in the picture," said Mr. Berger.

"First, then," suggested the Captain, acting as chairman, "Faxy and Junior must be the convicts that are hiding behind the chimney and refuse to come out. You see, they have guns and are prepared to fight for their lives.

"Some one will have to be Mr. Gilroy, the man who was attacked by the escaped prisoners and left to die in Blue Beard's Cave. We found him there and brought him to our camp, and now he is lying on a cot in an adjoining tent, advising us what to do.

"Julie and Joan climb up over the roof of the cabin and wait to hold up the two outlaws, the moment they show their heads above the roof. The rest of us have started a big fire in the chimney, and keep heaping on green wood to make it smoke the more. Now you girls know what happened after that."

"I can imagine," smiled Mr. Berger. "It will make a fine try-out for action, and gets the boys in at the same time. Now we won't bother with any

details for the picture, but it will be necessary for you all to use make-up in order to let me see how you show up in action pictures."

"I brought a compact along, thinking we might be glad to have it convenient," said Mrs. Vernon now.

"Fine! that saves time and trouble. I would not care to have the scouts mingle with the extras in their general dressing room, yet that would be the only way they could make up properly for the film to-day," said Mr. Berger.

"We know a lot about it, because we read up all the articles for information to help us. And Rex told us a lot more about it," said Judith.

"That's good. Then I'll just have a make-up maid come over from the dressing room and help you a bit," commented Mr. Berger.

A short time after this the scout party were a very amusing group, in regard to the appearance of their faces. Lips had been reddened, faces powdered and rouged, and eyelashes heavily blackened. Betty thought they looked perfectly dreadful and unnatural, but the director explained to her that it was necessary to bring out the principal features of the face under the powerful lights which were used in photography. He said that the human face of

a white man looked a dark yellowish gray on the film, as though he were a Mongolian.

Finally the picture of the capture of the convicts was taken, but Mr. Berger was not very particular about details, for, said he, "We won't use these in the regular production. I only want to try out how you look in the movies."

CHAPTER V

UNEXPECTED SLAPSTICK WORK

TOM SANDERSON arrived at the hotel that night, after the scouts had returned from their try-out on the Stellar Lot. He had come to remain until the film he was to do was finished, and this news was hailed by his friends with joyous acclaim.

"We're glad you came in time to help us out in our pictures," announced Betty.

"Is that the only reason for gladness at sight of me?" laughed Sandy, but his eyes unconsciously sought Julie, to find out, if possible, why she would be glad at seeing him.

Julie seemed to be too deeply absorbed in looking over the Dandelion Diary with the Captain, to note any eyes just then.

Sandy heard her remark to Mrs. Vernon: "I don't see why Mr. Berger can't start us off in that log hut picture first. The hut is there, and everything."

"And the scouts are to be there, and everything," giggled Ruth, who was sitting close to the Captain,

to listen to the important selections from that precious diary.

"To tell the truth, girls," remarked Mrs. Vernon, glancing up from the page, "I don't see why we have to start in the Rockies and trail back to the Jersey Hills. I think I will put my foot down on such erratic ways, and insist upon launching the scout life where we launched it—on our lawn,—digging dandelions for the cash to pay your way in camp."

"Good for you, Verny! If you insist, Mr. Berger will have to agree with you," exclaimed Joan.

"I don't think we ought to wait until we get to the Lot," said Judith thoughtfully. "He might have everything set and waiting for us, and then he might object at changing his plans for the day. If you telephone his hotel, as he said to do if we wanted to get in touch with him at any time, and let him know beforehand, it will avoid any argument."

"That is a splendid idea, Jude, and I'll do it!" declared the Captain, rising as she spoke, to go and telephone.

When she came back to the scout group her face expressed satisfaction, and the girls knew at once that she had been victorious in her suggestion.

"Funny thing, girls," said Mrs. Vernon, as she

joined the circle again; "I was about to say 'Hello!' when another voice said it for me; and it was Mr. Berger! He called up to ask if it would be all right with us if we went on with that log cabin part of the work. He says the other actors will not be using it for a few days, but he learned that the western set would be required by them for the rest of this week. And it will need a week's time in which to manufacture the papier-maché Redwoods."

The relief at hearing this news drew the entire group around the Captain's chair, and the diary became the center of attraction. Before they dispersed for the night the girls had selected the best incidents in their first mountain camp of that memorable summer, when they had first met Mr. Gilroy.

The following morning they were on their way, as soon as common sense would approve, for the Stellar City. Such laughing and talking that could be heard coming from the cars, as they sped along the boulevard to Hollywood caused many an eye to look after them.

Mr. Berger waited for them at the outside of the Gates, and Rex Hamilton stood with him, waiting to greet the scouts—possibly waiting to greet *one* scout in particular.

"Well, Scout Stars, everything is ready," said

Mr. Berger, after good-mornings had been exchanged.

"So are we!" called Julie, hardly able to keep her feet from dancing, in her anticipation.

The director led the way down Main Street, to a side path into which he turned. His group of stars followed, wondering why he had not gone in the direction of the hut. They soon learned why.

There, at the end of this pathway, could be seen a large set. It was boarded in by a high fence, and all the apparatus necessary to take pictures was already waiting at one side. Before them stretched a made-up lawn, the grass studded with paper dandelions—but the grass was genuine. It had been dug up in squares and brought to this set very early that morning. The joinings of the sod had been filled in with wisps of grass so that no one would ever dream that the work had just been concluded.

"Oh, aren't those dandelions cute!" exclaimed Betty, clasping her hands in delight at the way things were done out in this Magic City.

"But they are not real," returned Julie.

"Not real! Why, Julie, they are *growing* there!" cried Betty.

"They're *real* dandelions," laughed Mr. Berger.

"Well, that's what I said, Jule. You see they are real, after all!" was Betty's patient reply to her sister.

Then she wondered why her comrades laughed!

"I thought we'd start off with the scouts at work on the lawn, Mrs. Vernon," said Mr. Berger, explanatory. "You see, this set will be required for a scene of a lawn party in a few days, so we saw where we could save expense by doubling up on the scene."

"If they want dandelions for their scene you will have to grow more after we have done the picture to-day," said Joan.

"They'll merely take the same dandelions we weed out now and stick them back in the grass," laughed Julie.

"If we pull them out by the roots, as we did on Verny's lawn, they'll certainly look wilted before we finish with them," added Ruth.

But Mr. Berger now advised the actresses to go and make up, and dress in their camp uniforms, to be able to report when he was ready.

"Oh, we didn't weed dandelions in our scout clothes," said Joan. "We wore overalls that time. We were not able to buy any camping outfits until after we earned the money, you know."

"Did you bring any overalls?" asked the director, for a moment quite concerned at his oversight.

"Yes, I remembered them, and purchased some in the City," returned the Captain. And the news relieved the trouble lines in Mr. Berger's face.

"Then step on the gas, young ladies, and let's get in some good work while the sun is shining so brightly."

In thirty minutes' time you might have seen the first four girls who started the Scout movement in Elmertown that summer, kneeling upon the lawn, busily at work digging out the little yellow pests of a landscape gardener's life. But these particular dandelions seemed to come out of their own accord, —no resistance—quite different from the botanical plant.

The camera began grinding out footage and the four girls weeding that patch of grass did their work nobly. It consisted, in this test, not so much in yanking out tough roots as it did in trying to keep faces from registering the fun and frolic the experience provided for them.

The ordeal of keeping faces controlled while the film was reeling itself along in the camera was not very long. In an incredibly short time Mr. Berger called: "That's fine. Now you can rest."

"Rest! Why we haven't started yet, have we?" wondered Julie.

"Yes," laughed the director. "You see, we are not planning to run many feet of film to show you weeding out dandelions. It was necessary only to inform the audience how you thought of the name for your Troop. Now we can relax for a few minutes; and then get another picture of you girls, after all the dandelions are weeded out, and you will be counting them into the baskets you have for them."

In a moment's time the girls saw the workmen hurry over the grass, removing all the paper flowers, and dropping them in the baskets which they were supposed to have used as receptacles for the weeds.

"Gee! we didn't have so soft a time of it in reality," laughed Julie, when the men came forward to hand them the baskets.

Then a scene was taken of the scouts counting out the dandelions, to learn how much money was due them from Mrs. Vernon.

"Right there we will use a line of text to tell the public how much money you earned by the work," said Mr. Berger.

"Oh, it was not all done by weeding dandelions," quickly announced Joan.

"No, indeed! we washed dishes—ugh! and we

made candy, and we did lots of things to help out," added Ruth.

"Will we have to picture all those ways and means?" was the Captain's query.

"It gives atmosphere to the following pictures, you see, by showing short scenes of how the scouts do things," returned Rex.

"Also it pictures characterization of the individuals in this scout group. For instance, I was told that Miss Ruth detested washing dishes, yet she willingly did them to pave the way for her share in the camping expenses," added Mr. Berger.

"But you will not wash dishes or make candy to-day," laughed Rex. "That may not happen for many days to come."

"Let us hope the evil day will be put off as long as possible," retorted Ruth. "I never did outgrow my dislike of washing dishes."

Mr. Berger had ascertained that thus far the work seemed to be all right, but the final judgment could not be given until after the film had been developed and shown in the projecting room. Now he turned to Mrs. Vernon and spoke.

"I have arranged to do the scene where you take the girls in your car to visit the old log hut in the mountains, where you and your girl friends camped

one summer. The other members in this party can drive in the other cars, which will accompany us."

"Are you going to find a hill near here, where our camp could be located?" asked Betty wonderingly.

"No, I have no idea of driving quite so far for so simple a scene," was the smiling rejoinder from the director. "The drive in the car will be all I need now to impress the audience with the idea that you are going to *see* the old camp-site. Then, in the distance, there will be a vision of a range of hills, or mountains, which is the place you are hunting for.

"Later, the car stops in the country road and the Captain points up to a view of a rocky woodland road and the car turns in there. Finally this road ends in a trail too rough for automobiles, and you all have to get out.

"Now I will need you scouts in your dress which is suitable for that outing in the woods—understand?" said the director.

"Yes, we understand; but we did not wear camp clothes at that outing, Mr. Berger. We hadn't purchased our complete camp outfits at the time," explained Julie.

"Then you can go in the clothes you have on now, eh?" asked Faxy.

"Mercy, no! Don't you see, Faxy, we are quite grown up now? And at that time we were very young girls," announced Joan.

"Must we hold up this work until we find suitable juvenile clothes?" demanded Julie impatiently.

"Not with our wardrobe lady at beck and call," retorted Mr. Berger. "Say, what size shoes do you scouts wear?" He was told, and he turned to one of the men on the set, "just chase over to the Emporium and ask Miss Himelshut for four dresses suitable for four country girls. Hats and shoes and all—and hurry."

"I hope they won't be Sis Hopkins sort of gingham," laughed Julie, after the man had gone.

"Or Mary Pickford hats," added Judith.

"If you young ladies will just step over to that last dressing room in the row to the right, I will deliver the clothes to you there. The Captain will not need to change her apparel, but she may like to suggest certain changes in your appearances when you are dressed. The maid will assist in any way you wish," said Mr. Berger.

So the four scouts accompanied Mrs. Vernon to the room designated, and began to remove their dresses and shoes. In a short time the man returned with the large box of clothes for them.

Upon opening the box the girls were agreeably surprised to find shoes apparently new, and country hats and simple dresses as fresh and clean looking as though they had come from a store.

Their astonishment at this fact expressed itself as soon as they rejoined the director and their friends.

"I expected to see spotted, soiled second-hand clothes," said Joan, as Julie concluded her words of agreeable amazement upon opening the box of clothing.

"You did!" exclaimed the director, as surprised as they had been, but from a different cause. "Were you not aware that the City Board of Health is most strict in these matters of costuming? Every time any part of a costume is worn by an actor, be it for one moment, or for a month, it has to be sent to a disinfecting and cleaning establishment. A garment has to have a tag attached by the Health Inspectors, or we are heavily fined for the negligence. That is why every large corporation maintains a cleaning and disinfecting plant on its own grounds. It means a tremendous saving in overhead expenses."

"Then we won't feel so squeamish about using your costumes, as we did before we knew this," confessed Julie.

The automobiles were waiting, and the entire group, camera men and all, filled several cars and started on the drive.

The Vernon car, as it was called now, was in advance, driven by the Captain. The four girls, in their school-day dresses and hats, enjoyed the fun of acting exactly as they might have done at the time they first went to see Verny's Campsite.

After a pleasant drive through the countryside a short distance from Hollywood, the scouts were called to halt. Then the director's car drove up and Mr. Berger said: "That was fine. Now we can return to the City and continue the outing."

"Oh, Mr. Berger!" called Betty anxiously. "We haven't come to any rocky road leading up the mountain side. What shall we do?"

"That's exactly where I am going to lead you now," laughed he. And the cars turned to retrace their way back to Stellar City.

Betty said nothing, but she wondered how he was going to climb a rocky path to Verny's Camp by going back to the Lot. She was soon informed.

"Now we will go down this side path and see if the set the men have been building is something like the scene you need," said the director, as they all marched down Main Street once more.

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Then to Betty's amazement she saw a steep rocky road built up against a high wall. This road the scouts were expected to climb, the more laboriously their efforts the better for the picture.

"What will we do when we get to the top of the wall?" was Betty's question.

"Oh, before that time the camera will have stopped and the scene will be done," laughed Mr. Berger, fully enjoying the surprise of these green stars.

So the scouts began to climb the old woodland path that led to the grassy plateau on top of the wall—but the wall would not be seen in the picture. Only the steep trail and the climbing girls, at the heels of their Captain. The rest of their party stood at the foot of the ascent, out of line of the camera, enjoying this make-believe to the utmost.

After several trials, in which the girls failed to register the expressions of difficulty in climbing over the rocks, and the suggestions of anticipation of what they might find revealed when they reached the end of the road, they caught the spirit of the acting and the director was satisfied and called for camera.

"That will do fine!" declared he, at last. "Now we will move on to a stage where a woodland scene is vacant. We can use it for our next scene, when



Ruth leaped not knowing where she would land.
Girl Scouts in the Magic City.



you reach the end of the trail and find yourselves in the forest, where the hut will be discovered.

This woodland scene was built upon a stage that backed upon a stage where some hilarious acting was going on. The girls were not told what the other picture would be, but they smiled in sympathy every time they heard loud shouting and laughing on the other side of the canvas.

"Now, scouts," ordered Mr. Berger, "you are about to push a way through this brush and forest growth of tall pines, in the keen hope of stumbling upon the old hut, which might be quite hidden by vines and undergrowth since the years the Captain last visited it. Let me see how you register, while slowly pushing a way through this jungle."

The girls rehearsed several times and then the director called, "That's good. Hold it, and keep on!" Then he shouted through the megaphone, "Camera!"

At the precise moment, when the scouts, following their leader through the sylvan woodland scene, were being pictured by the camera, a deafening explosion sounded from the stage adjoining the one where the girls were working. An instant later, before any one had time to think or wonder at such a shock to the nerves, came a crash and a tearing, ripping sound, upon the canvas wall, and right

through the painted pine trees, into the open woodland scene of Nature's peace and quiet, bounded a wild-eyed horse. The trunks of painted pines, great shreds of blue sky, the very moss and wild flowers of the ground, hung in awkward tatters from the head, the saddle and the tail of the animal. But the amazed expression in the horse's eyes, and the trembling of every nerve in his body, as he halted suddenly in the unexpected change from interior darkness of a western saloon, to the sunny glare of a girl scout's outing-day, combined with the different methods used by the scouts to escape from the hoofs of the frenzied beast, made a picture too funny to describe. The camera-man, with rare presence of mind, continued grinding the scene and, fortunately for a thousand laughs for the public, caught the entire comedy in its perfect expression.

"Oh, Julie!" gasped Faxy, when he could control his voice once more, "if you only could have seen the expression on your face, as you did a cartwheel into those bushes."

"And Jo!" added Sandy, after he had made sure that the horse would not trample the girls. "Did you ever see any mere human shin up a post the way she scrambled up that make-believe tree?"

"Where's Ruth?" now shouted a chorus of voices.

"Here be I!" came a thin little pipe from the far edge of the jungle, where Ruth had leaped without knowing where she would land. To her utter amazement she had struck upon a bed of sand, which was the substance that was most receptive to sticks and brush and tree-trunks. From this bed of sand she had rolled off into the trash of the jungle—dead leaves, sticks and other stuff discarded by the workmen after building the scene.

The Captain had braced her shoulders and was making up her mind to catch the horse and save her charges even if she lost her own life in the attempt. But the old animal had no idea of escaping from so delightful a glade, and Mrs. Vernon's face was caught by the camera, as her expression of courage gradually changed to one of open-mouthed surprise, at seeing the runaway begin to nibble at the foliage of the make-believe forest growth.

And Betty? Well, this scout remained exactly where she had been at the time of the unexpected entrance of the undesirable star performer. And she wondered why Mr. Berger had tried to have a broncho introduced into that scout scene!

CHAPTER VI

JUST FILLERS

WHEN the "extra" had been removed by the western cowboy, who had been teaching the poor horse certain screen stunts, at the time the animal had asserted his independence and landed through the canvas, to play a part in the scout picture, the Captain sat down upon the rocks. The director then whipped out a large handkerchief and wiped his perspiring face.

"Too bad! Just as we were getting a fine scene," said he.

"I know of one fine scene we'll get next," declared Joan, wagging her head emphatically. "That's luncheon."

"Couldn't you wait a half-hour, until we get the rest of this scene? I fear you will not be in the same mood after luncheon," said Mr. Berger.

"Maybe not," answered Julie, "because the mood—I am speaking from experience for all the scouts—we're in at present will not photograph at all. In

fact, we might say, we would appear as a Vision, a Fade, you know."

"Ghosts of our real selves, you see," added Joan laughingly. "You don't know the appetites and the need we scouts have for food at stated intervals."

"I can vouch for that, Mr. Berger, because Rex and I have invited these girls out to luncheon and dinners," said Faxy.

This caused a general laugh, and the director decided to escort his party to the cafeteria on the Lot for refreshments.

"If we have time enough, after we get back here and get the rest of that woodland scene, I would like to do a few fillers," remarked Mr. Berger; then they all walked down Main Street, in the direction of the long low building, which was flattered by the name of "The Ritz".

"What is a filler? Never heard of it for a movie," was Faxy's reply.

"It isn't the same as a 'filler' in publishing work," explained the director. "I called it that, because it seems to fit in just where I want it: I use fillers to connect up the more important scenes, in case we have to cut out certain bits of film which leaves the main scene rather raw or ragged. A filler generally

smooths out such edges and brings the two scenes together nicely."

"I should think a better name for that purpose would be hinge," said Faxy, smiling.

"But Mr. Berger does not want the scenes to come open," retorted Julie.

"I would say the use of safety-pin would do the trick best, then," was Joan's idea.

This term struck everyone as being so ludicrous that a merry laugh burst forth just as the scouts reached the Ritz. Consequently those within already lunching looked up to see who these demonstrative new-comers might be.

While Mr. Berger sought for long tables, where they might be accommodated, the regular actors of the Stellar Company, already enjoying baked beans and soup and baker's bread, began to whisper.

"They are that Eastern crowd out here, to do a serial for the Girl Scouts of America," announced one.

"I hear they have oodles of coin, and are doing this for the fun of it," said another.

"They would have to have a milyonbucks to play around with Rex Hamilton," said another.

"I hear they are stopping at the swellest hotel in Los Angeles. In fact, they occupy a whole floor,

with their valets and maids and whatnot," ventured a girl, who did not wish to be behind her comrades in giving information.

"Where are they working to-day?" asked one.

"Haven't heard. Maybe Berger is only showing them how it is done," replied the first speaker.

Mr. Berger, at this, sent a warning look over at the group of gossips, and they lowered their voices enough to continue their speculations without being heard by the scouts.

"We really do not mind being credited with a million dollars, nor with having suites and maids at the finest hotel," was Julie's laughing whisper in the director's ear.

"Only it would feel good to try one of those stunts," sighed Judith, at his other side.

Now the orders were brought for the girls and they found thick vegetable soup, large rolls, bacon and beans, and then pie with ice-cream a very filling provender indeed.

"Now that we have made a huge success of *this* filler," said Julie, when they had cleared the dishes of every crumb, "we may as well try out Mr. Berger's fillers."

Back to the woodland scene they went, and once again the director struggled valiantly with the girls,

the camera-man, "the everything," until finally he pronounced the arrival at the campsite on the Jersey mountain very satisfactory. Then he began to suggest fillers.

"I want to get a few of the short scenes to follow the one where the scouts are digging dandelions. I thought we could try the one where Miss Ruth is washing dishes much against her inclination, to earn some extra money. Then there would be those girls who made fudge, or helped out in ways to earn cash for expenses for their camp outfits.

"Next I want a picture of the Lee's home interior, where the conversation with Eliza takes place. I want to show Eliza baking cake and bread for the campers. The tent pitched upon Vernon's lawn, ought to come into a filler, too, because we will have to pin up the scene on the lawn, where the dandelions are dug up, with the one where the scouts start for home the same day."

"So you are going to use my safety-pin for the fillers," laughed Joan.

"I wondered if you would catch that, when I said 'pin'," returned Mr. Berger.

"I catch everything but measles," retorted the scout.

"That line spoken by Betty, when she said 'Liza

was going to give us a parting pie' ought to bring a laugh from the audience," suggested Julie.

"I have it down already, Miss Julie," agreed the director. "I also want to get a good picture of the departure for the camp, with all the families grouped around to wish you good-by. Another good scene will be the one where Hepsy has to pull all the camp-stuff and finally makes the grade up the rocky road to the plateau."

"Oh, say! Why did we not think of this, when the western broncho burst through the canvas! We might have kept him on location until he had done Hepsy's stunt," laughed Judith.

"We hadn't any buckboard for him," remonstrated Betty.

"Are you going to show how we started camp-life? Building a cook-stove, chopping wood, bringing in water from the spring, and all that?" asked Ruth, thinking of the picture she would make, at the time she balked against chopping wood for the fires. She was heartily ashamed of that now.

Mrs. Vernon understood, but she also explained now. "If you picture that incident exactly as it happened, Ruth, and then show how you overcame your dislikes of certain things and actually qualified for a crown, it will be fine. You see, Ruth, the

girls who have no such temptations to overcome, never can compete for rewards. It's those who fight that secure the victory. And there is the lesson I am most desirous of teaching all the girls who may see this serial picture."

"I see your point, Verny, and I will offer my feelings gladly on the altar of sacrifice," was Ruth's smiling reply.

"Listen to Ruth! She speaks like a Napoleon," called Hester.

"Or a lover who is renouncing his sweetheart forever," added Amy Ward, laughing.

"How about reading the laws and rules for the guidance for girl scouts, as given in the handbook published by the Organization?" asked Mrs. Vernon, of the director.

"I think they can be flashed upon the screen in order as they are printed in the book. It would appear somewhat after the manner of newspaper items that are photographed you know," explained Mr. Berger.

"That's what I would like," responded the Captain. "I want those rules and laws to appear in full, to teach the public just what scouts are striving for."

"Do we have to wait until the log cabin is at our

command, before we can start building the annex?" now asked Joan.

"Not necessarily; but we ought to have the hut scene, in case it needs to appear in the picture now and then," said the director.

"And we won't be idling time away while we wait," retorted Julie.

"We can do the stunt of having Hepsy haul the timber for the annex. That part of the work doesn't pin on to the cabin scene," suggested Ruth.

"And that will be lots of fun, because we know it is all make-believe anyway," said Betty happily.

"How about the logs? Are they make-believe?" asked Amy.

"Yes," returned Mr. Berger, "they are made of hollow papier-mâché, tinted to represent tree-trunks."

"My goodness, no wonder movie actors believe the world and its life to be counterfeit. They get so they think *everything* is a sham," commented Faxy, with the manner of an Ancient Sage.

"The scene of preparing for your Sunday visitors will take a lot of film, Captain," said Mr. Berger, as he studied the script made from the diary kept by the Dandelioners.

"It will pay to use it all, because it is interesting," said Mrs. Vernon.

"Yes; and, with the scouts' sense of humor, we ought to introduce many a laughable stunt," added the director.

"*Talking* about fillers isn't going to fill, is it?" now demanded Julie, who was eager to do some more acting.

"You'll get all the acting you want, before I finish with you, young lady," laughed Mr. Berger.

"If there is to be so much, let's begin at once," said she. "You forget, I am the kind that thrives on hard work."

"Not unless the work is to your liking," declared Joan.

One of the old-time "give and take" discussions might have followed, had not the director's cameraman now appeared and announced that he was ready to work. Thereafter the remainder of the afternoon was filled with fillers. And everyone declared it had been a most enjoyable time, with such novel amusement as re-living again with such funny shams to use, the camp life of the Dandelioners.

The following morning the scouts were to do the chapter on cabinet work. This would be in line

with an educational picture, but it would come in sequence with their camp life in the serial.

Late that afternoon, after the director had pronounced the stunts a success, he suggested that the next day's programme could be the Fourth of July Outing. But he had not concluded before the camera-man, whose name was Rafael, (his comrades had cut it to Rafe,) interrupted.

"The other gang is through with the log cabin set to-night, Berg."

"Is that so! Then we can start right in on that Stage in the morning. I like to keep the scenes following each other as near as possible. We ought to finish up the hut work in one day, don't you think?" he appealed to the Captain and the four scouts.

"Oh, yes; if you mean the day we drove up to have a look at the old hut, and later when we arrived in camp," replied Mrs. Vernon. "But we couldn't build the annex hut in one day—impossible!"

"You forget, Madam, that all you do is to make-believe you are sawing logs, and *trying* to build an annex. The papier-mâché cuts readily, and it is not heavy to lift. Again the girls will find the nails are easy to push into the imitation logs."

"My mistake!" was the Captain's apology, and the

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scouts laughed at her forgetfulness of the way movies were made.

Therefore the third day of working on the serial began with the visit to the hut the day the scouts decided to camp there that season. This scene took but a short time, then the more important one of adding another hut, as an annex to the old one, began.

This was heaps of fun for the four girls, because the logs which had been so easily dragged up the slope by Hepsy (an old nag kept on the Lot for any call in farm or slapstick pictures) were so light, but looked so heavy.

Julie enjoyed the fun more than her companions, and her antics kept the on-lookers in stitches of laughter. For instance, she was balancing a log as she straddled a beam on the top of the new hut, when she obeyed a flash-idea of mischief. She pretended to be dangerously near to toppling off the beam, because the log was so heavy, and this she continued until she had Joan, who was on the ground working, in the right place to get the end of the log on the top of her head. Suddenly Julie screamed in warning and pretended to have her grasp on the wood slip along until the log dipped and banged Joan. But the imitation log was so light that it

bounced from the dome it had struck. This caused Joan to look up casually, to see what had touched her head; and the indifferent expression on her face, which should have registered pain and agony, was ludicrous.

The camera-man stopped grinding and waved his arms in impotence at such slapstick work; and the director frowned as darkly as any pirate in a play, but all to no good; because the chorus of appreciative laughter from the audience was against them.

The scene, beginning with Julie about to drag the heavy log into place on top of the hut, had to be done over, and this time the work was properly done.

Another filler was made, showing the scouts hunting for beefsteak mushrooms, Indian potatoes, which grow wild in the woods, and berries. Then the picture showed how to cook the beefsteaks.

According to the continuity of the story the next event in the scout's camp life should have been the trip to Blue Beard's Cave. But Gilly was not present to act the part of the attacked man; and seeing that he would have a star part in all succeeding stories of the serial, it was decided to wait for him to return. But the scene where the convicts hid back of the hut, and the scouts smoked them out could

be done. Therefore the director said that that stirring incident would be started the following morning. Faxy and Junior offered to play the part of the outlaws in the picture, providing the scouts would promise not to smother them with the smoke and congratulations.

"There may be an unpleasant lot of smoke coming your way, but nixie on congratulations," retorted Julie.

"True," added Joan. "It's we scouts that will receive condolences for having such poor actors in the picture with us."

"Listen to the humble little stars!" jeered Faxy. "To hear them, one would think their prestige might suffer by having us act as supers."

At this point of the chaffing the director came over and said, "We could just about do that scene where your families drive to camp with a load of cast off furniture for your huts. Do you think you can attempt another filler, or are you too tired?"

"Tired! mercy no. We never get weary of playing. And this is genuine sport," said Julie.

"Well, then, I can hitch the nag to a large spring wagon and do the scene where your families bring all sorts of odds and ends to donate for your huts. Then we can drive along some rural road and take

a picture of the trip to the camp. Then we will take the scouts in camp, receiving their families and showing dumb amazement at the useless gifts donated for their camping life. That will make a funny picture—the more ridiculous the items donated the funnier it will seem.”

“All right, Mr. Berger; let’s do it,” agreed the Captain.

“The scenes of collecting the things, and the drive over a country road can be done any time, without the scouts’ presence, but the reception is the one I want to do now.”

“You’ll have to dress up the other girls, and the boys, for parts in this scene,” said Joan.

“Yes, Mr. Berger. They can make up some way to appear as my sister and the relatives of the other scouts. And the men!” added Julie.

“Faxy can be my father, and Junior must be Mr. Allison. Sandy can be Mr. Lee, ’cause he is so tall,” planned Ruth.

“The driver of the truck will have to be John; and Rex can take the part of Gilly, while he was helpless in bed. We can sort of cover up his head, or face, and the camera can trick it so no one will know it is not the real hero of the Fourth of July outing,” said Julie

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"It will be a pleasant change for Rex to play dummy for some one else," laughed the director. "And to think that not even his fine teeth may show in a smile in this scene."

"Better make a list of furniture you want your workmen to get from the wareroom," hinted Rex, to Mr. Berger.

So the director turned and described to the men the items he would like to have, but more especially were they to try to find an old fashioned banquet lamp; a golden oak hat stand, a sofa, a rocking chair and an old husk mattress. Any other queer stick or ornament they could find would be all right.

"Don't forget the old kitchen stove and the massive walnut bed that Mrs. Ormsby donated, because that was the funniest and most useless donation of all," called Julie, as the men turned to go away.

CHAPTER VII

MRS. VERNON'S SURPRISE

THE day Mr. Berger planned to do the scene where the scouts visit Granny Dunstan's cabin on the ridge, Rex was persuaded to double for Mr. Gilroy, because that truant star had not yet returned from his trip with Mr. Vernon to the southern part of California. The scouts had enough snapshots in their diary to show Rex just how Gilly had looked at that time, and he promised to see what could be done about it. He thought he could make up all right; he might pull down the hat he would have to wear and shade his face somewhat. Then he could manage to keep a view of his face out of the camera's eye, without causing suspicion in the minds of the public.

So it developed that this scene went forward without the presence of Mr. Gilroy, and Rex played the part to his own gratification, because it gave him an opportunity to hover near Judith. Lucky for this star, that he did not have to shine in his own picture that day!

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Faxy offered to play the part of Mark, the young man who brought the horses to camp, and then guided the scout party up the trail, until they reached the cross-trail that led to Granny Dunstan.

The girls and the Captain wore their scout uniforms for riding, and all went well at the start. The start in this instance was from the front of the huts in the woods, and the riders went about ten yards across the set, before the camera-man shouted "all right!"

"Now, girls, we'll ride out to a woodland park and do the real thing," said the director. "Your comrades can go in the cars with the camera-man and my assistants. I know just the spot, about fifteen miles out of town, where we used a tumbledown old cabin such as you describe in your diary. The setting is perfect for this scene of yours."

So the scouts and their Captain, accompanied by Faxy, as Mark, the stable-boy from Freedom, and Rex, doubling for Gilly, rode after the guide, Mr. Berger, along the road to the hills where they were to find the cabin and do the scene.

On the way there Mr. Berger thought it a good idea to refresh his mind and the minds of his actors by having the girls mention all the principal inci-

dents of that visit to the old naturalist's home in the forest.

He had no difficulty in starting Julie and Joan talking of that event, and once they started they continued. Then Ruth and Betty joined in the story, to remind the other two scouts of details they had failed to mention. Finally Mrs. Vernon took up the thread of the tale and did her part too.

It was the Captain who began to tell the story of how Granny Dunstan's great-grandson had enlisted in aviation at the time the *Lusitania* was torpedoed by a German submarine. How he won the *Croix de Guerre* from France, for his daring in an aeroplane raid upon the German camp; how he was presented with the Victoria Cross from Great Britain for service in their behalf; and at last was given the American Eagle for bravery and courage, when saving a comrade from the enemy.

Then the Captain went on to tell how John Dunstan came to Dandelion Camp, as soon as he returned from Washington, D.C., to his mountain home and visited them. How he had known and met her son, Captain Myles Vernon, of the La Fayette Escadrille. How this very John Dunstan had been Myles' companion for that dangerous raid, in which Myles Vernon lost his life. When Mrs. Ver-

non spoke of the verification Dunstan gave her, in the report of how Myles' death had been instantaneous, when his plane struck the ground; and how the Germans had honored the bravery of the young American Captain, and had interred his body with all military courtesy, her voice trembled and her eyes became dewy with emotion.

Rex had been riding beside Judith, and had heard snatches of the conversation; but the moment Mrs. Vernon began to tell the story of how John Dunstan and her son Myles Vernon had taken part in one of the ace events of the War, Rex forgot Judith and turned his horse's head sharply, so that he was over beside the Captain in another moment. Now he placed a hand upon hers, which held the reins, and he spoke excitedly.

"Mrs. Vernon, did Myles ever write to you about a chum of his in the aviation corps, by name of Rexford Hamilton Maybee, of Chicago?"

"Why—ye-es!" stammered she, as their eyes met, and both their horses were halted suddenly. They continued to gaze at each other for a long, silent interval, during which the scouts and the director realized that this was no *reel* scene, but the genuine article!

Then the Captain gasped: "Can it be possible?"

Were you another of my son's comrades in France?"

"If he was Captain Myles Vernon, of the La Fayette Escadrille, then I was with him from start to finish!" declared Rex.

"But your name—ah! I begin to see," said Mrs. Vernon, very slowly.

"My stage name is Rex Hamilton, but my true name is Rexford Hamilton Maybee. I came home and found no position waiting, or possible for me, but I was well-known as an aviator, so I agreed to come here and do some war pictures for the movies. I remained as you see. It pays me well."

"And you really are the boy they called 'Ford' and later rechristened 'Tin Lizzie'?" laughed the Captain, in a hysterical tone.

"Yes, I am 'Tin Lizzie', but how long ago it all seems!"

"Girls," declared Mrs. Vernon, gazing at the scouts gathered around, "Rex was called *Tin Lizzie* over there, because he was always filling the time meant for a little recreation, in spying upon the enemies' camps and outfits. At these visits he generally came away with souvenirs—souvenirs of rifles, helmets, automobiles, and utensils; and the bit of metal that won him the name, was the trophy of capturing a small tank single-handed and steer-

ing it straight for the Allies' lines. He had disguised himself as a German, and was not discovered, until he had reached protective fire from his own lines."

Then Rex blushed like a girl at the praise and hero-worship now awarded him by everyone present.

The Captain saw, and quickly added:

"And I remember John Dunstan speaking of you, too. How you climbed the tree in which his plane got caught and helped to cut him free from the torn wings and ropes. And how both of you managed to escape from the Germans, after John was able to get out of sick-bed."

"Yes, that's old John. He was a wonder. I never before met anyone so fearless and so brave. No deed was too hazardous, and no daring too risky for him. But he had nothing on Myles. *There* was a Captain that inspired every one of us in that squadron with zeal to win an ace. Of all his boys there are but three left—John, Jerry Braun, and myself. How I should love to see old John once more!"

All this time the group of scouts with the director had been sitting upon their horses in a circle around the two stars in this by-play. So thrilling

was the news that Rex Hamilton was none other than Myles Vernon's old chum and friend, 'Ford' Maybee, that the scouts refused to budge from that spot, until they had heard all that was to be known.

"Our automobiles are out of sight, far down the road," now commented Mr. Berger.

"And we ought to be on location, doing stunts, instead of sitting here reviewing the stirring past," said Mrs. Vernon.

"But, Mr. Berger, what do you say about introducing this story told by John Dunstan in the picture?" suggested Julie. With Rex, or Ford Maybee, an eye-witness to that air-raid which was the last one Myles led, and a star actor at that, you ought to get a wonderful punch out of the scene. We scouts will gladly fade out of the scene, if you will only say you will follow John Dunstan's story of that battle. Such a scene would make amends for all the bad acting of us scouts."

"But you do not realize, young lady, what a great expense it is to a picture company to engage a number of aeroplanes to fly in a scene," remonstrated Mr. Berger.

"How many would we need to do the stunt properly?" demanded Joan, her face showing what she thought of Julie's idea.

"Well, there would have to be the squadron of American planes, and there ought to be enough German planes to show there was a battle, you see."

"I am well known at the Aviation Field on the Coast, Mr. Berger, and I can get a number of my friends to consent gladly to fly for us, if you decide to introduce that story in the serial," said Rex.

"And I will agree to defray any expense of this scene, Mr. Berger," added the Captain. "In fact, if Mr. Vernon knew of this meeting with Myles' old chum, he would insist upon your having the story pictured, as a tribute to the bravery of those American boys—the three surviving members, and the deceased ones, of that famous Squadron."

"Well, it seems quite feasible to me, Captain; but I must submit your offer and ideas to my superiors, and see if they will consent to have it done. For myself, I shall tell them that it is a very valuable addition to the serial, to have a real aviator take part in a scene which was so thrilling," said the director.

"If we can't decide the matter right off, suppose we ride on and see what can be done in that Cabin scene with Granny Dunstan," said Ruth, urging her horse to resume his canter down the road.

A little farther on they saw the automobiles

pulled up beside the road, while the occupants were enjoying the cool breeze under a wide-spreading shade tree.

"Where have you all been wasting our time?" demanded Amy and Hester, the moment the scouts came within hearing distance.

"Wait until you hear the story. You'll not wonder," called Ruth, who was in the lead. Then the amazing discovery, that Rex Hamilton was really Rexford Hamilton Maybee, of the famous aviation squadron in France, had to be told again.

At last Mr. Berger was permitted to conduct the scouts to the decaying old cabin in the woods, where the pictures of Granny Dunstan and the conversation about herbs and simples took place. The part of Granny was played by an "extra", an old woman who did the characterization to perfection.

The only hitch in the work happened when the old pig, which had been brought in a sack, in one of the "property" cars, rebelled against behaving as he should inside the cabin. The scouts were nicely posed outside the door, expecting to hear "camera" shouted by the director, when the pig—or rather the hog,—bounded from the interior and came up hard against the masquerading Mr. Gilroy's shins.

The impact was so unexpected and so hard that it

bowled Rex head over heels, and the hog squealed loudly with fear at being caught. Away went the porcine animal, with a number of workmen after him. The hog had the best of that race, however, since he had had a clear getaway before the men collected their wits to chase him.

All the other actors in that scene turned and watched with amusement while the pig went this way then that, and doubled on its trail, in eluding its followers. Even Mr. Berger watched and laughed and heartily wished the camera was close enough to get a picture of the unexpected comedy.

Rex had scrambled to his feet and thought for a moment how to square his account with that porker. He ran over to the car where all the extra items, which might be needed in a picture, had been placed, and here he found a coil of rope. Armed with this he ran down the path toward the pig. He stood beside the woodland trail while starting to whirl the line around and over his head; and then he let it fly, at a time when the hog was standing momentarily still to stare at its followers. In another moment the lasso had fallen over the animal's neck, and in the ensuing struggle of the beast to free itself, the rope was pulled taut.

The men that had chased the hog now came up

and captured their prize. But it was decided after that to dispense with such lively atmosphere, and leave much to the imagination of the public.

"I would have preferred having Gilly act his own part in this last scene," declared Rex, rubbing his shins, as he joined the scouts.

"What is a mere hog-blow to one who was 'Tin Lizzie' over there?" teased Mr. Berger.

"That was then; and now is different," retorted Rex. "Now I am the soft, petted darling of easy-work. My shins feel sore at the simple mention of being bumped."

"That's because all the bumps you movie stars ever get are artificial ones. But this pig did the genuine stuff!" laughed Joan.

The ride from Stellar City to the woodland on western horses had been rather fatiguing for the scouts, so it was decided that those men who drove to location in the cars would ride the horses back; and give their seats in the automobiles to the four girls and the Captain. The workmen willingly agreed to the exchange, because they preferred the novelty of having a ride. Automobile trips were common events to them.

On the drive back to Stellar City Betty interrogated Mrs. Vernon, who sat on the seat beside her.

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It then developed that Betty had in vain tried to make head and tail of this movie business! Her questions, which had confused and puzzled her so, proved to be a source of entertainment to the other scouts in the car.

"Verny," began she, "I have been trying ever since Rex escorted us about the Lot, to interpret the things these folks here say and do. Now there was that New York mansion scene: remember how the groom, or butler, I don't know which he was, was so polite and bowed with such dignity, when his mistress passed him at the door and went out? Well, when she had to go back and act the scene over again, why should the servant place his arm around the lady and walk back with her, quite as though he was no servant at all?"

The scouts laughed, and Mrs. Vernon smiled as she said: "Rex told us that the servant was the lady's real husband—not reel mate. That his special work was doing the dignified and severe butler act."

"We-e-ll, maybe so," grudged Betty earnestly. "But that cannot explain why that western outlaw, whose horse jumped into our mountain camp, you know, should tell the workman standing there waiting at our stage, that they had to shoot a full load

of *salt* into the animal. Rock salt, he said it was. They didn't use a gun for it, surely!"

Again the girls laughed, and the Captain explained very patiently: "Yes, I was told that was done to make the old horse jump in a manner to make him seem to be unexpectedly agile and lively. It doesn't seem kind to the animals, but they say it is the least harmful thing they can think of. Lashing or kicking a horse is more cruel."

"Another queer mistake they make, Verny, is the way they shut up every interior and make it as dark as can be, then they go to work and light up as many electric things as possible to give them artificial light. Why not leave the places open and let the sun do the lighting in the daytime?"

Mrs. Vernon explained as well as she could why it was necessary to do pictures by strong artificial lights; and why, to do this, it was imperative that the interiors be dark.

"I've listened to Mr. Berger command the camera man. Instead of saying 'Now photograph this', or 'try and take that', he shouts through his megaphone 'Camera'. How does the poor man know just what he is to take?"

"And another foolish thing the camera-man does is to take the pictures of cards, with nothing on

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them but numbers: all kinds of big painted numbers. I'm sure no one wants to spend money to go to a movie just to sit there and see cards with numbers on 'em shown on the screen."

This brought a chorus of laughter from Betty's companions, in which Mrs. Vernon had to join. But Betty merely looked at them in surprise. She saw nothing to laugh at in her query.

"You are all like the silly movie fans—you laugh at things which haven't a single excuse for laughing," she said. "And you act just as nonsensical as all movie actors act!"

Mrs. Vernon now explained why the numbers were used—to enable the assemblers in the cutting rooms to find the continuity of the story in the numbers used on the film. Without a guide of some kind, the pictures would be all mixed together and would take forever to arrange in proper sequence.

"That's just why they ought to start at the beginning of a story and act it right through. Then they wouldn't need numbers and such extra costs," remarked Betty.

"Next thing Betty will want to know about is why anyone should use such funny terms as 'Save it' when the lights are to be turned off, instead of saying 'Lights off!' And why they say 'Kick'

when they have no idea of having anyone kick—they merely wish the lights turned on," said Rex, who was driving the car.

"That's exactly what I was going to ask you," agreed Betty earnestly. "I don't see how you could guess it so quickly.

The merry laughter at her expense never caused her to feel the least bit annoyed, however, because she was used to being laughed at and told how "funny" she was.

CHAPTER VIII

ADIRONDACK STUNTS

THE next few days were devoted to working out all the minor deeds and acts of the scouts which led up to their departure for the Adirondack Mountains. Mr. Berger had been undecided whether to take the California pictures first, while the real heroes were there to play their own parts, or to try out the picture of the hotel fire in the Adirondacks. Since he could use the boys so well in both these pictures, he finally chose the Adirondack one first.

In the morning, when the scouts and their friends reported at Mr. Berger's office, they found the chief director, Mr. Alsop, there with him. Introductions were made, and then Mr. Alsop said how pleased he was with the work accomplished during his absence.

"And you will be glad to hear that the directors of our company have voted to have that aviation scene in France during the War included in your picture, girls," announced Mr. Berger.

This news caused a general expression of delight,

and Mrs. Vernon went forward and impulsively shook Mr. Berger's hand. Was it not his doing—because of the manner in which he presented the plan?

Mr. Alsop now informed the scouts that both he and Mr. Berger would supervise the work on the Adirondack canoe trip, and he hoped the pictures would move along without any more hitches or delays.

"I told the scouts that their work was being unusually facilitated, when they complained that it all moved so slowly," said Rex, who was free for the day, to give his time to the scout work.

"That may be," declared Julie, "but it doesn't change the situation one bit: that all of you movie people waste precious time in doing absolutely nothing. There is actually more time lost in standing around, or waiting for goodness knows what, than there is used in actual filming."

"We will benefit by your suggestions and strive to make up time on your pictures," laughed Mr. Alsop.

"If you don't, you're going to lose your stars before the serial is completed," added Joan. "We are booked to get back to Elmertown by September last."

"Then we'd best not waste time here talking it over. Let us hie to the Adirondacks!" chuckled Mr. Berger, who dearly loved to hear the scouts threaten him. Then they all went to the dressing-rooms where girls and boys made up for that canoe trip on Fulton Lakes.

The first scene planned for the day's work was a huge surprise to the girls. At the far end of Main Street they turned off to a side way which led them to a wide area of ground; this space had been used for baseball scenes, football games, or acts where much open field was required. Now this large space presented a very different scene. Down the entire length of the field glistened a stream of water. The edges of the tank which had been built hastily to represent the water of Fulton Chain of Lakes, were completely screened by weeds, and water plants, and the grass which grew on the bank along the stream.

Several canoes were floating idly at one end of the impromptu lake, awaiting the coming of their occupants for that trip.

"Here's where we ought to have an Indian Guide," said Judith.

"Here's where you shall have one," retorted Mr. Berger, pointing over his shoulder at a hardly visible group of people sitting upon the opposite shore,

under the shade of artificial alder bushes. In this group the girls now distinguished a man in costume and made up to look like Yhon, the Guide.

"And you will find your dog Jake waiting to greet you," said Mr. Alsop.

At the words a dog began barking eagerly, and the girls saw with amazement that a dog, very much like Gilly's old dog Jake, had been found in some magic manner and now stood wagging his tail and anxious to accompany them on this canoe trip.

"It certainly beats all, the way things are done in the Movies!" exclaimed Hester, as she stared at the clever imitation of the real scenes in the Adirondacks.

"We have to do it this way, you see, or spend a fortune in travelling about to the actual locations," said Mr. Berger.

After as much confusion and bustle as they really had had the day they started on the trip through Fulton Chain of Lakes and during this scene the camera was grinding away regularly without the scouts being aware of it) all, including Yhon and Jake, were settled and ready to push off.

"What fun,—to paddle a canoe in this tank," laughed Julie.

"Hold your face, please!" commanded Mr. Ber-

ger, to compel the scouts to realize that this was business, and not a joke.

Julie turned her face away from the camera on shore, to finish her laugh without criticism. But, she continued paddling at the same time. The scene followed closely the description given in their diary and the very fact that the scene-makers had so cleverly made up a shore-line with such unusual material as Nature never dreamed of in her vast store-house, kept the scouts enthralled in watching them.

The perfectly natural expressions on the scouts' faces, as they looked for and admired the different devices used to mimic the Adirondack lake-shores, were exactly what the directors desired, and the camera shot many feet of film during that trip.

"Oh, girls! looka!" shouted Ruth, suddenly, pointing across the water at a deer just spied in the shadow of the bushes.

The scouts stared in speechless wonder at the way these men did such things, and Mr. Alsop chuckled aloud at their facial expressions. Then he whispered to his assistant: "They sure are natural!"

"The very fawn we saw that day!" cried Betty, clapping her hands in delight.

"No, not that one, because she would be grown up now," laughed the Captain, but she kept her head turned towards the bank so her laughing would not be reproduced in the picture.

Jake began barking madly at the fawn, which stood there with forefoot lifted and head erect, apparently listening to the plashing of the paddles not far from her drinking place. But the deer seemed not to mind the dog.

"She must be a tame deer, Verny, don't you think so?" asked Ruth, when she found the graceful creature had not stirred.

"Ruth! That's a *stuffed* deer!" cried Judith merrily.

"Stuffed! Oh, it can't be," was Ruth's amazed reply.

"Of course it is! Do you suppose a real fawn would wait there in all the confusion and racket we are raising?" laughed Julie.

"Why not? It's home is on Racquet Lake," quizzed Faxy.

"Pooh! some one is certainly trying to appear bright!" was Joan's jeering remark. Then everyone laughed at poor Faxy, who looked so funny in a boy's scout camping suit.

Finally the canoes had reached the extreme end

of the tank, which was about a thousand feet long, and then the scouts wondered what they would do next. They were to be surprised again.

"Now you scouts can lounge around for a time, until our workmen can remove the scenery and plant new bits of Nature," announced the director.

"Then what are we to do?" asked Joan.

"Start to paddle back down-stream and let us take a view of you at another lake scene," returned Mr. Berger.

"Why—!" one of the scouts began to gasp, but she said no more. Probably her surprise choked her from further utterance.

In a very short space of time (so many men there were working on the scenery), the bushes, the trees, even the fawn, had been removed, and now one could see forest trees starting to take a stand. One could not truthfully say they began to grow, because they came to that soil all ready grown and waiting to be stood up wherever the landscape director thought best. When they were all arranged to represent a thick pine forest it was difficult to say at a distance whether they were genuine tree-trunks, or made of papier-mâché. But one great beauty they lacked—the green crowns of aromatic pine! These trees seemed to grow well until they reached a cer-

tain height, then they stopped short and refused to branch!

After bushes and rocks and trees were planted, all the workmen combined efforts at the other end of the tank, to build the rocky rugged shore up which the scouts must climb and carry the canoes. This was the point where the portage from Cedar Island to Inlet had to be made, in order to reach Sixth Lake.

Mr. Berger called to the scouts that all was ready, and once more they seated themselves in the canoes and declared themselves eager to resume the trip. The camera began grinding, the directors shouted advices through the megaphone, and down the length of the tank came the canoes. The scouts were as delighted with the change of scenery on shore as they were in the actual experience of canoeing down Fifth Lake.

Arrived at the landing place, the work of getting out and of getting the canoes upon the boys' backs was done in a most natural manner, which required no coaching from the directors. Then the climb up the rugged bank began, and the girls began to giggle at the very idea of struggling so hard with paper rocks, and the artificial moss and grass covering the ground.

"That was very nicely done," called Mr. Alsop. "Now we will rest while the men change the scenery once more to give us the scene of entering Racquette Lake. Here is where we will need the bit of painted scenery for the far end of the lake—showing in the distance the hotel and summer colony under the pines."

The scouts now sat upon the artificial bank and watched with interest while the workmen shifted trees and rocks to different groupings, and then planted bushes, and left grassy clearings where the lake shore neared the hotel location at the far end.

Finally this was finished and the word came for the scouts to paddle along Racquette Lake until they reached the shore, where the hotel could be seen in the distance.

"We have canoed up and down this tank and yet we do not find the trip tiresome," laughed Julie, as she settled herself in the bottom of one of the canoes.

"No one would dream that we have been canoeing on the same old water," said Joan.

"Because all water looks alike, and the only change we see is in scenery and the difference in landscapes, as we had it to order right here," added Ruth.

"When you scouts arrive at the landing place yonder, do not forget that one of the canoes overturns and sends the occupants into the water," shouted Mr. Berger, through his megaphone.

"Now, ready?"

"Yes, all set!" Julie called back.

"Then start!" and as he spoke, Mr. Berger watched the canoes move away from the shore. The camera began to grind and all went well until they reached the end of their journey. Now Hester's canoe was expected to overturn, and it did. But the scouts, in trying to drop into the water gracefully, in order to have the camera record them as lovely water-nymphs, must have collided with Julie's canoe. Over it went, and down went the occupants. Jake thought this so funny that he sprang clear over Yhon's back and would have landed free and far from the third canoe, but the Captain was just about to stand up to get out on shore. Jake collided with her, and both went headlong into the lake.

The directors doubled themselves over with laughter, and the camera-man stopped short to stretch his neck out to see what all the screaming and shouting was about. The tank having but two feet of water in it, could not even indulge the scouts

with a swim; so after their soaking, they had to scramble up and climb out upon the artificial bank of papier-mâché, and wait there until some one told them how and where to dry their clothing.

Mr. Alsop ran along the edge of the tank and now joined the dripping actors. "I have sent the workmen for dry costumes, and they should be back in less than ten minutes. But the scouts who are supposed to fall in, might as well keep on their wet clothes. They will not be noticeable if they remain seated in the canoe. Only the one that has to stand up and pull at the blankets needs a dry costume on."

"Well, you will have ample wet clothes to hang on that washline around the kitchen stove, to dry for the scouts before morning," laughed Mrs. Vernon, feeling of her sopping hair.

With dry clothes on, and once more seated in the canoes, the scouts were most careful to keep at a safe distance from Hester's canoe, when she took the dive. This time all went as desired, and the picture proceeded as the diary outlined it.

"Now then," called Mr. Alsop, "you wet scouts get into the dry things waiting in the dressing-room for you, and then we will all go back to the stage where the hotel scene is ready. We will rehearse

a couple of interiors before we quit for the day."

Twenty minutes later the entire group left the vicinity of Racquette Lake and started down Main Street. The directors led the way, and the camera-man, with the workmen and any extras who had been watching the work, brought up the rear.

The scene they were now to use showed the little cottage interior, where the scouts were to spend the night. In the little kitchen of this building the wet clothes were hung out to dry; and then the party separated to go to bed. Some went to one tiny room on this side of the narrow entry, and some went to a room on that side. Soon all the tired scouts were sleeping soundly.

Rex was playing the part of Mr. Gilroy, and he had been given a corner of the entry for his cot-bed. Mrs. Vernon had been given the best bed in the cottage, and in the "flashes" she appeared to be sleeping sweetly. Then, as the director shouted, that the fire in the hotel had started, she opened her eyes and sat up in bed. She seemed to be disturbed by cries of help and of fire. So she quickly sprang from the bed and was about to raise a window, in order to see what was the trouble, but she forgot the walls and windows were all sham and

very fragile. The Captain, in her zeal to act the part as truthfully as she had done in the real episode, used her muscle on the sash. To her horror the entire side of the window casement came away in her hands, and the cottage wall was left with a yawning gap.

At the moment of seeing Mrs. Vernon spring from the bed to call the scouts and see what was happening at the hotel, the workmen had been ordered to start the red fire burning in the vessel outside the window. This would give the required glare to the night scene, to make the audience believe a fire was raging next door.

But the disconcerting gap in the cottage wall, where the window fell out, showed the man squatting close to the cottage, feeding red powder to the lurid color coming from the pan.

The directors shouted at the camera-man to stop, and the scouts rolled over and over in their laughter at the result of that "First Aid."

"Have to try it again," called Mr. Berger.

"What about the window? Do you want me to stick it back into the cardboard wall, and try another way of discovering where the fire is?" asked Mrs. TVernon, still holding the papier-mâché window frame.

"Yes; you might run from the room and shout for Mr. Gilroy, and beg of him to see where the fire can be," decided Mr. Alsop.

So the window was pushed back into its aperture and when the call of "help," "fire" was heard again, the Captain leaped from the bed and ran over to arouse Mr. Gilroy.

Then followed a scene of lively confusion. The acting was very real and the camera kept on grinding out the picture, until the scouts were hastily clad and started to run out of the cottage door.

Once out of the cottage interior, the scouts found they would have to go with their directors to another stage, some distance away, on a side alley, down Main Street.

"We have the hotel scene there ready. It was a hotel interior used by another cast the other day. All country hotels are the same, and no one will question whether this one is in the Adirondacks, or down in Oshkosh," said Mr. Berger, as they walked along.

When the scouts reached the stage where the doomed hotel stood, they also saw a peculiar structure on the stage next to that where the rescue scene was to take place.

"Look at that queer side of a house with nothing under it, but the posts which hold it up at a right-angle!" called Ruth.

"That's for you," laughed the director.

"For me? what for?" asked Ruth, in surprise.

"That's the side of the house you girls will have to climb, when you try to rescue the people up on the top floor," explained Rex.

"Never! Do you mean to say that all we have to do to win the life-saving medal is to promenade up that inclined board-walk?" asked Julie.

"That's all. But you will have to practice the promenading with your head on a level with your feet," advised Faxy.

"Let's try it out and see how it goes," giggled Amy.

"First I want to get that scene, where you scouts come racing into the set with your minds teeming with first aid plans," said Mr. Alsop. "The boys will be inside the burning building bringing out furniture, and trying to carry the half-smothered guests through the smoke out to the open air. Then you girls begin your work."

The signal was given to start the artificial fire behind the false front of a hotel; and the man in charge of the smoke began to create a smudge which

would look as though the great Chicago fire was burning once more.

"Come on, boys," ordered the Director; "one of you has to run up to the top of the hill to strike the metal hoop that calls the volunteer fire department to the scene; another gets inside the hotel and helps save furniture, and others save the guests, and so on. Now, Alec!"

"Alec," so-called for the present scene, turned and ran away frantically calling "fire! fire" and in another moment's time he was out of the scene. The imagination of the audience would have to see him racing up the slope to strike the signal, but he would not really be doing any such thing that day, because he would have to wait until the director drove them somewhere where a slope could be used.

When the try-out had been pronounced satisfactory, Mr. Berger started Alec again, on the same scene. The camera began to reel off footage and the scout started his sprinting, yelling fire again and again. The onlookers stood and laughed heartily at the whole farce. But their time was to come!

The next scene the directors wished to take was that one where the scouts ran from the cottage with a coil of rope, and wet towels to tie over their noses

and mouths. From the front door of the burning hotel men could be seen moving a small piano, a number of parlor chairs, tables, carpets, etc., and piling them up, supposedly at a safe distance from the fire, but in reality out of the scene entirely. The guests (extras) began to fling clothing and such things as they found at hand from the windows, and all was now a scene of great confusion.

Now into this state of affairs ran Julie and Joan, with the coil of rope and the wet towels. They stood in front of the hotel gazing up at the windows of the third floor, where smoke was issuing in dense volumes, and then Julie glanced at her companion and said, while she pointed to the side of the house where one could see a rambler rose growing high and clinging to a trellis which reached to the windows of the second floor. In another moment they were off stage.

Mr. Berger attended to the concluding details of this scene, but the camera-man had stopped grinding. The guests inside the hotel were not aware of this, and they continued their efforts to save the chattels in the house.

Mrs. Vernon never thought of what might be coming down from the second-story windows, as she started to cross the open space of artificial grass,

which stretched between the hotel piazza and the camera-man. She wished to ask Mr. Alsop a pertinent question.

Just as she got to the middle of the grassy place a voluminous feather bed came sailing down from the front window, hurled out by Alec's muscular arm—Alec in this scene happened to be Sandy.

It caught the Captain fairly over the head, and in another moment she was borne to earth, trying to realize where she could be. Then the stuffy feather-bed began to heave and roll in fine imitation of the billows of the sea. A chorus of laughter sounded from the various groups in the set and, finally, when Mrs. Vernon emerged once more, she heard the camera-man working away at the machine with a zeal unlooked for. He had seen the tremendous hit such a picture would make, and he caught it in its entirety without being told to do so.

"You'll surely not use that!" declared she with a frown.

"If it turns out to be so laughable we certainly must try to work it in some time, in some place," replied Mr. Berger, still laughing.

"Why, Verny," called Ruth, "it's almost as funny as the scene where Gilly is holding up the holdup men at Lake Tahoe."

To change the subject as quickly as possible, in order to prevent Mrs. Vernon from forbidding the scene to be used, Mr. Alsop shouted through the megaphone: "All over to the adjoining stage, please."

This was the great flat side of a house, with the rose trellis reaching to the second floor windows. Everyone anticipated having some sport now, in watching Julie and Joan climb up the trellis and get busy saving whoever might be left in the place.

They all stood in front of this scene while Mr. Berger described the work to be done. He read from the scenario, which had been written after the items given in the diary, and now tried to impress upon the minds of the two scouts that they must clamber as though it was a risky deed and they had hard work in doing it.

"Then when I call out 'All set,' and signal the camera to start running footage, I want you girls to remember all I've said."

So Julie and Joan nodded their heads understandingly and then began their rehearsal. Both scouts ran on, "discovered", as Ruth said, with anxious faces. One had the coil of rope, the other the wet towels. When they arrived at the foot of the trellis, Julie said to Joan: "Now let's tie the wet

towels over our faces to prevent being smothered."

"That's all right!" shouted Mr. Berger. "Now tie the towels, and begin climbing at once."

Julie tied the dripping towel carelessly over the lower part of her face, and started up the trellis. While Joan was still tying the towel over her face, her friend began the ascent. Then Joan followed after her.

"Say, this is pie! If every wall was so easy to ascend, we'd never be kept out of the enchanted gardens," laughed Julie.

"But you must make it *seem* to be difficult!" called the director.

Julie was possessed with one of her mischievous spells, however, and she suddenly straightened up, stood erect and pretended to be trying her best to balance herself. In the picture it would appear as though she was standing out horizontally from the side of the house. Joan stopped climbing to glance up and see what her comrade was doing to cause such peals of merriment from the audience, and at that precise instance the loosely wound towel on Julie's face fell. Its dripping length came down upon Joan's upturned face and gently draped itself about her head.

Joan forgot she was still at an angle of forty-

five degrees, and she let go her hold on the trellis, to remove the towel.

"Camera!" shouted Julie, making a megaphone of her hands.

The man had not been paying much attention to the scene, for he was loading a pipe during the interval he thought he would not be called upon to grind. Now, however, he instantly turned to his work and started grinding. Joan was about to roll down the inclined wall, and Julie saw an opportunity to do some funny stunts. She leaned over (in the picture it would show her almost doubling back from the side of the house) and caught Joan's blouse where it was slack in the back.

The teetering and tawtering that now began, with Julie's free hand waving in wild circles, and her feet, first one then the other, doing the Charleston on the trellis, while all the time she held her grip on poor Jo's blouse in a way that lifted it straight out, was a scream.

But Joan was clutching fast to the fragile trellis, to offset Julie's struggles to make her appear to be falling. The wet towel still clung to her face and she dared not use a hand to tear it away, because she needed both hands to cling to the anchorage of the rambler rose.

Suddenly, without warning to the two battling scouts, the slender framework of the trellis came away from the house and both the girls, with artificial rose bush, trellis and all came toppling down the descent. They reached the bottom, with the long strings of rose-vines wrapped around their forms, but their arms and legs sticking out, here and there, through the slat-work of the trellis.

The camera kept on grinding, even after the Captain, the two directors, and all the scouts had raced over to disentangle the girls from their towels, the floral trimming and the trellis. And all were so convulsed with laughter that the work of assisting Julie and Joan out of their snare seemed wellnigh hopeless.

"I must say," gasped Mr. Berger finally, as he caught his breath, "you scouts would make a fortune in comedy work. Now take this most dangerous and serious job of saving lives in the hotel fire, you turn it into a comic that beats anything I ever tried to stage."

"That's an idea, Boss," declared Julie, sitting up in the midst of the debris around her, and wagging her head wisely. "When we conclude the scout serial, we ought to do a funny interpretation of the same picture, for a life-annuity, you know."

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"I can suggest much funnier incidents than scout work, if you are so inclined to do them," announced Mr. Alsop.

"Then you, too, see possibilities in our doing a comedy?" queried Joan eagerly.

"I should say I did! Why, you girls, bubbling over with spirits and fun, were not cut out to do dignified and serious stuff. If you had your way all along you would have made a fool of Berger, and made a farce of his ideals for scoutdom," returned Mr. Alsop.

"Captain, did you hear that! You and we are signed up to act in slapsticks after this picture is finished," teased Judith.

"Not if I know it," retorted Mrs. Vernon. "That episode of the featherbed is the first and last hazard this Hortense appears in."

"Sort of 'her last appearance', eh?" laughed Ruth.

"'A farewell tour of America', as all famous stars say," added Hester.



Suddenly, the girls, trellis and all came toppling down.

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CHAPTER IX

SHOOTING THE RAPIDS IN PICTURES

It took three days to complete the hotel scene satisfactorily, because Julie and Joan needed the greater part of one morning in which to climb that trellis that reclined so nicely that climbing became too easy for the scouts, and get into the window of the house.

Then followed the interior scenes of the hotel fire, where the girls met Alec and all combined forces to save the cripple, in the attic room. To say that the scouts had the merriest time of their lives in trying to act serious and frightened, while they lowered the rag-baby from the roof, and swung Gran'ma, dangling from a rope, free from the blazing windows, and finally got her down to the lawn, where willing hands quickly untied the rope from about the stuffed muslin form, is putting it very mildly.

Immediately after Gran'ma had been rescued from her top-floor room, the watchers from below

heard gales of laughter coming from the three unseen scouts upstairs.

"Hurry! you must save your own lives now," shouted Mr. Berger through the megaphone. But it seemed that the three brave ones refused to be saved by persuasions.

"Now is the time for the firemen's ladder scene," called Mr. Alsop. "Call to the girls that they are due to climb out to the roof of the veranda and be saved."

"Hey, up there!" yelled Mr. Berger, impatiently, "send that fresh Alec up to the roof where he is being momentarily threatened with a horrible death, by first being smoked, then roasted to a nice dainty brown!"

Fortunately the camera was not grinding when Julie's red face popped through the open window of the front room and she controlled herself enough to explain.

"A terrible accident has occurred up here. What shall we do? Is there a doctor down there to try to revive the poor mother of that infant we saved?" The laughter of Joan and Sandy contradicted her words of dread.

"Behave yourselves, and do as I tell you," bawled Mr. Berger, trying his best to register an

angry expression, but all those around him were smiling sympathetically, as they looked up at Julie.

"We *are* behaving—fine!" retorted Julie. "How could it be otherwise, while we are in constant danger of being shrivelled by the fire which has reached the very last bits of the hotel. But, you see, we are too brave to desert the unfortunate mother, and leave her to a fiery grave?"

Now Joan's head appeared beside her friend's, and she called down: "The mother has fainted so hard, that all the hay is coming out of the wide-open gap made in her side, where the chain stitching ripped."

"And we need surgical weapons with which to sew her up, or she can't be saved. Alec-Sandy says he can push her body inside a bungalow apron we found up here, and tie it so the hay won't be lost, when we save her," laughed Julie. "How about it?"

"By the great Julius Cæsar's ghost! what do I care what she does, as long as she keeps on with this scene!" yelled Mr. Berger, impotently banging the megaphone upon the ground to emphasize his words.

"But that's the trouble!" argued Julie, pleasantly from above. "She can't do a thing—we have to do all for her, in her helpless state."

The girls laughed at this, but Mrs. Vernon thought the director was really growing angry, and she called to the two scouts.

"Come, Jule, come, Jo. We *must* finish this hotel fire. All the smudge will be used up, and the red fire is dying out already."

"Upon your heads be the result of hastening this woman down that distance," was Julie's threat, as she turned away and was seen no more at that time.

Immediately afterward, the bulging form of the make-believe mother was helped out of the window and lowered by means of the rope. In the picture, the audience watching below were supposed to rush over and help the poor woman to the place where her child was stretching out its arms to her. But it failed to register as it should.

"Couldn't you two boys support the woman and help her over to the child?" asked Mr. Berger, as the form of the dummy remained doubled over upon the grass.

"It would be better to have one of the girls dress up and play the part of the nervous wreck," suggested Mr. Alsop.

"We can do that later—I want to rehearse this scene first," said his assistant.

Then Rex and Faxy offered to help the hay-filled

woman over the grass and see that she was reunited to her rag-baby. They really performed the part, with fine emotion registering upon their faces, considering how foolish it all seemed. Then they managed to screen the dummy while she was being bent up in a way that would *compel* her to hold the baby, when it was placed in her nerveless arms.

"That will do as a practise," said Mr. Berger. "Now leave the dummy over there, and come be the firemen, who raise the ladder to the roof, to save that intrepid scout up there."

"Where is he?" demanded Faxy, staring aloft.

"There come the girls!" shouted Judith, pointing to the piazza roof.

The scouts were now sliding down the tin roof, and soon were on their way to *terra firma*, by way of the piazza post, down which they slid, monkey-like. Fortunately the slide was short and their activities on the alert, or they would have collapsed with the post. It was of papier-mâché, and was not supposed to be used as a fire-escape. Thus the weight of the two scouts crumpled it up and, before their feet reached the ground, it had come away from the tin roof and now leaned far out after the manner of the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

"Now looka there! why did you scouts come

down that way anyhow?" demanded Mr. Berger. "Didn't you know we were going to have a fireman help to carry you down the ladder?"

"We didn't do that in the real fire,—we slid," said Joan.

"But it will seem more effective to have a fireman in a red flannel shirt and a shiny helmet, such as those country firemen always wear, climb up and assist you well-nigh overcome girls to safety," explained the director.

"Oh, I simply adore a man in a red flannel shirt!" said Julie now, rolling her eyes and clasping her hands in mock sentiment.

"And I vowed I'd never fall in love with *any* man unless he wore a shiny helmet!" added Joan instantly.

"Then that's me!" exclaimed Junior Henderson, catching the helmet from Faxy's head and shoving it down upon his own pate. In another moment he was over by Joan's side and was trying to pick her up in his arms.

"Stop! what do you think you are doing, you crazy It!" bawled the director, in his exasperation at these antics.

"I'm rehearsing the scene you just mentioned," said Junior innocently.

"Well, wait for the ladder and the signal to get up."

Meantime the workmen had brought a ladder and now the volunteer firemen were ordered to raise it against the piazza roof.

"Won't the whole business cave in, with that post gone?" asked Faxy.

"What, that bit of cardboard?" laughed Rex. "You didn't think that supported anything, did you?"

"Is that insult meant for us publicly, or was it just lack of tact on your part?" demanded Julie now.

"What insult?" was Rex's amazed reply.

"Why, to declare that we were mere nothings! Didn't you just state that the post had not supported anything?"

While the scouting party laughed, the two directors exchanged glances and Mr. Berger pretended to tear his hair in futile wrath. Mr. Alsop laughed at him, and shook his head. Then he whispered: "No good! Youth will have to get just so much silly nonsense off their chests."

"But all the fire is burning out, and the hotel is not burned down yet!" wailed the director.

At this moment Betty's cry drew attention in that

direction. They saw one of the funniest sights of the day, and Julie instantly yelled "Camera!" Even Mr. Berger shouted, forgetting to use his omnipresent megaphone: "Oh, quick! get that bit!"

And the camera began grinding a scene in which the old horse, used when the hotel furnishings were transferred from the warehouse to the hotel, was quietly but none the less successfully chawing the hay from the broken side of the helpless mother. At the time that Betty called attention to this "cruelty by animals" to the dummy woman the nag had swallowed all the fodder that had tempted him, and was busy in pulling out the rest from the muslin holder.

After many amusing errors, occurring through misinterpretation, or purpose, on the part of the scouts the film of the hotel fire was completed. Then the directors announced that the work on the morrow would be the scene of Julie and Joan shooting the rapids, on the Rocky Mountain tour.

"This is going to be lots of sport, I can sense that!" exclaimed Joan, as they drove to the city late that afternoon.

"Imagine us doing a 'Perils of Polly' in a tank," added Julie.

"I wonder where the fall from the cliff will be done," said the Captain. "You couldn't drop from

any height into that shallow water of the tank, you know."

"Mr. Berger says it will be a dummy that falls—then I have to connect up the scene by coming up from under the water and struggling valiantly to keep myself from being swept down to the whirlpool by the current; that's where the fun is coming in for me," was Julie's reply.

"Too bad there isn't a chance for me in that scene," remarked Sandy, who was driving the car.

"It would be bad for the footage if you were in it," retorted Julie.

"Oh, well, I can abide my time," said Sandy; "it is coming soon, in New Mexico and Arizona."

"Sandy, did you ever read the 91st Psalm?" asked Julie.

Her companions stared at her in wonderment. What was the girl referring to now?

"Of course I read my Bible!" exclaimed Sandy, with a frown. "Did you think because we live in the wilderness that we never heard of the Scriptures?"

"Then you will remember the words of the first paragraph. You reminded me of it, that's all," explained Julie.

Sandy made up his mind to read that Psalm as

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soon as he reached the hotel, but nothing more was said about it then.

That evening Rex had his friends to dinner with him, and then escorted the entire scout party to the first showing of his new picture. As the different scenes were revealed upon the screen he explained the methods and manners of making the sets and the tricks used to have the public see the daring feats as though they were genuine.

The following morning the scouts met Mr. Berger at his office, and then went with him to the stage, where the scene for the Rocky Mountain experiences of Julie and Joan on the shores of the river was ready-made.

The first scene shot by the camera showed all the girls pulling the canoes upon the beach and turning them over to dry out. The second scene showed Mrs. Vernon and a few of the scouts superintending the dinner, and sending Joan and Julie to hunt for a spring of water and fill the big camp pail. The next scene showed the two scouts standing on the river bank, beside the canoes, glancing over the water at the opposite shore.

"Now we will have to go to the tank and do the river stunt there," said Mr. Berger, after he had O.K.'d the footage made of the three scenes.

The scenery, which had been built up on the river-bank opposite that side where the scouts stood, presented a far different aspect from that of the Fulton Chain and Racquette Lake pictures. This time the opposite shore rose precipitously from the water's edge to a height of about twenty feet. Upon this bluff of papier-mâché rock Julie would stand and seemingly suddenly slip and slide. But the slide down that bluff would not take place—only in imagination.

"Yonder, where you see the shore slope down to the river's level, is where you will crawl out and proceed to follow the sandy strip along the water's edge," said Mr. Berger, nodding his head at the other end of the tank.

"To prevent you girls from staring in surprise when we start 'the rapids' running in the tank," added Mr. Berger, "let me explain: Those men yonder will work the vacuum machine to create the wind, and the airplane will churn up the water for you. Then it's up to you to keep your canoe right side up."

"Now, girls, start the game," called Mr. Alsop, when he had satisfied himself that the scenery was all right. "Show us what you can do in this first rehearsal."

So Julie and Joan pulled the canoe into the water, and then began paddling down stream—that is down the length of the tank,—to show that they were fighting hard against the terrific current, while their faces registered deepest concern over their predicament.

“Now get over to the opposite shore and change seats as you did in the real experience,” shouted Mr. Berger, through the megaphone. “You know—one of you scouts got out and tried to pull the canoe upstream again. Then when you are swept off your feet, the other girl has to see that the canoe runs opposite that inlet made in the shore—see it, way down at the end of the tank?”

Joan and Julie remembered—how could they ever forget that narrow escape they had had from going into the whirlpool—and glanced at the inlet mentioned. Now they began to paddle for the opposite shore, where Julie would get out and try to pull the canoe up-stream again.

Certain it is that crustacean creatures would never choose to live in the turmoil of waters that rushed through that Rocky Mountain gorge. Besides, this water had been pumped into the tank through the usual water pipes and meter, so no creature the size of a man's hand could have found its way into the

pool that way. Nevertheless, Julie was wading along with her hands gripping the end of the canoe, and apparently she was striving hard against the powerful current, when Mr. Berger called "Camera", because the expressions of the two girls pleased him tremendously at the moment.

But the next moment, after the camera began grinding and the audience grouped about the directors were watching intently the really fine acting of the scouts, something not scheduled in the scenario, or mentioned in the scout diary, happened.

"Ouch! Owow—wowow!" yelled Julie, letting go the canoe and trying to run for the shore. The water, near the beach, which the canoe was approaching just before Julie's change of register, was shallower, and she made for this strip of sand. But she was howling and kicking all the time.

Her friends and the directors ran along the board walk on the edge of the tank opposite the scenery side, shouting to be told what was wrong. In fact, Mrs. Vernon feared Julie had cut her foot severely upon an unseen object, or on a seam in the metal tank.

The scout now threw herself from the water upon the sand and, to the surprise of everyone present, her foot displayed a huge crab clinging to her toes.

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The moment the scout's foot whacked upon the hard-packed sand, the crab's clutch was weakened and it was flung high into the artificial bushes behind the scout.

Julie rocked back and forth, holding her toes between her hands in a sympathetic manner, while her face expressed deep concern over the poor toes. But her callous-hearted comrades could not restrain their laughter. It echoed far and wide over the Lot, and many an extra wondered which star was performing such a funny picture as to cause the entertainment for all the company working there.

Joan's canoe was drifting away without anyone taking notice of it. The tremendous agitation of the water, which had been produced by the aeroplane propeller's whirling, to churn up the waves, had stopped automatically when the workman turned off the electric current, in order to run over and see what had happened to one of the stars of the Troop.

"How the heck did that creature get in this water?" bawled Mr. Alsop, when he saw the cause of Julie's unexpected act.

"It must be one that got away last night, after the comedy actors finished their work here," said Mr. Berger. "You know, they did that slapstick picture, where the bathing girls coax the dude into

the waves, where the lobster and crab pots are baited. I stopped to have a look at the scene while they were shooting it, and I saw the dude coming up out of the sea with dozens of the creatures clinging to his body."

"If you knew that why didn't you go into the tank yourself and see that the last crab was caught and grilled?" cried Julie, angrily.

"What a waste of my time, Miss Julie, when you did the trick without assistance. Now that we know you caught the crab, we can proceed without more concern," laughed the director.

"You don't catch me going into that tank again, until all the water is drained out and you *show me* there are no more lobsters or crabs there!" declared Julie positively.

"I think that's only fair," agreed Sandy, who sided with the scout.

So the water was soon drained off and no other creatures being found in the tank, fresh water was pumped in. Meanwhile the one crab, that had been trying to escape across the imitation rocks and bushes, had been captured and remained a prisoner in the possession of one of the workmen. He saw in a "fade", where he was the star performer, with a fine grilled crab for his lunch.

The scene began again. This time without mishap or hindrance, and after another rehearsal the director had the camera-man take it. The canoe, having been swept down the stream, now made its way into the creek that opened into the river. Soon after reaching the end of this inlet, which was only a few feet in from the river—just long enough to allow the canoe to get in without being seen from the other end of the tank, where the camera stood—the scouts got out.

“Go along back of the shore scenery until you reach the ladder, which you’ll find there for you to use in climbing up the back of the rocks; then you can be seen climbing up over that steep bluff just across from us,” directed Mr. Berger.

Joan and Julie obeyed. As they walked along behind the river scenes, they noticed and laughed at the way the back of the shore was propped up. The bluff extended along the river (rather the tank) side for half the distance of the length of the tank, and then the scene for the beach act began. The high bluff was made of scaffolding at the back, and braces to keep the front stretch of canvas and artificial rocks secure. From the rear, the girls could see nothing but props, cross-beams, and the back of the canvas wall. But soon they came to the ladder up

which they had to go to reach the steep rocky bluff.

"We never had such modern conveniences provided for us in the Rockies," laughed Joan.

"Nor anywhere else, excepting in *reel* life," added Julie.

Now they had reached the top of the ladder and found a thick bush planted there to hide their first arrival from view of the camera's eye. But Mr. Berger had been looking through his opera glass and had spied the scouts first.

He dropped the glasses and took up the megaphone, and then instructed the girls what he wished them to do.

At last he called "camera!" and felt gratified at the acting which was going on on top of the bluff.

"Now Miss Julie stands on the edge of the bluff and is gazing across the river, where she expected to find the meadow and the scout camp," shouted Mr. Berger.

Julie shaded her eyes with her hand and stared directly across the tank at the group standing with the directors. She frowned and seemed to be wondering at what she saw.

"Now, Miss Julie, you see nothing, and you register deep concern," called Mr. Berger.

"A truer word was ne'er spoken!" retorted Julie.

"I see naught but a group of nonentities on the opposite shore. But I cannot register more concern, since it is none of mine. It concerns only you folks over there."

All the time she was speaking her brow puckered and her words belied her expression. Joan expressed fear and wonderment, too, but her speech denied her looks.

"I don't care what you two say or feel, just so long as you hold that expression and show the camera something good," laughed Mr. Alsop, as he appreciated the acting, as well as the speaking of these scouts.

"And now, Miss Julie, you lose your footing and slip upon the grass at the top of that bluff. You can grasp hold of the roots and shrubs with perfect security, for I have tested them out on an extra, and they held. As soon as the camera gets that fall and your dangerous suspension over the river far below, we will have you rescued. The men with the net will wade out and stretch it out for you to drop into. Now, are you ready?"

Julie signified that she was, and the director called to the camera to grind. Then the scout slipped and tried to do the stunt exactly as it had happened before in the Rockies. She clutched *at* the shrubs and

roots, which were said to be secured to the back of the canvas wall by means of bolts and props. But her fingers failed to catch on to them. Her slip was so *real* that she slid on, and in a moment's time had reached the edge of the rocky precipice. In another moment she was doomed to plunge down from that high bluff into two feet of water in a metal tank!

Mrs. Vernon and her companions screamed in terror at what would follow, and the boys sprang into the water and started across, arms waving and voices trembling as they shouted advice.

But the unexpected happened! The workmen, in building the bluff, had done so in great haste, and one of the twenty-penny nails used on the heavy props behind the scenery had come through the canvas and projected a full two inches beyond the face of the rock bluff. This nail caught hold of the seat of Julie's knickers; and, being securely stuck by having its head in a stout two-by-four joist, it never bent nor loosened by the weight hung upon it.

There the scout dangled! Midway between river and bluff. And the camera kept on grinding the picture that could not be reproduced so realistically again at any price.

Joan had, meanwhile, crept upon hands and knees

to the edge of the rock and leaned over to ascertain the cause of her friend's impromptu aviation.

"Oh, Jule! you're all right there. A spike as long as my arm is holding you up," called she.

"You think I am all right where I am, but I prefer to exchange places with you," retorted Julie, her sense of humor coming uppermost, the moment she heard from Joan. Then, when she had discovered that she was not in any immediate danger of fading out of real life, she began to think over the situation.

"As long as we are running footage for this scene you ought to get something worth while," she called down to Mr. Berger.

In a minute's time thereafter, so rapidly does the human brain operate in time of pressure, everyone suggested a different idea for a slapstick comic. Both directors bubbled over with enthusiasm and thus one of the funniest reels in the Girl Scout's Comedy came into existence.

At last in this Comedy scene, the ladder from the rear of the high bluff was brought to the front, and Julie was rescued by Sandy, just as a great sheet of red fire was touched off on top of the bluff, to represent a make-believe eruption of a volcano, in which the villain had had his lair. The entire pro-

duction, from the fiercely made-up outlaw who had captured the beautiful heiress of billions of rocks, which had been collected by her father, General Got-Rocks, to the rescue scene upon the shaky ladder placed in the tank of water, was very funny. The laughter of a public was expected to result from the exposure and the revealed frauds and tricks used by movie folk in producing just such tragic scenes.

CHAPTER X

SANDY PLAYS A STAR LEAD

THE picture of the two scouts' adventure on the bluff was finally completed, and then Mr. Alsop decided to start work on the pictures of the Dandelion Troop in the Redwoods, in order to have the three young men,—who with Rex and Sandy would make up the needed characters of beaux for the girls,—do their own character acting. If their fathers returned from the southern California business trip before this work was finished, it would prove to be annoying to lose the three boys.

Therefore the scenery of a camp in the Redwoods had been ordered, and during the time this was being constructed the two directors concluded to take their company to the coast and do the steamer scenes from a Los Angeles dock, and the Pacific Ocean.

"The public looking at the picture will never know whether the ocean is the Pacific or the Atlantic," said Mr. Berger.

"You can't fool them that way when it comes

to the Panama Canal," declared the Captain.

"We won't attempt to fool them that way," said Mr. Berger.

"You surely don't plan to invite us on an excursion to Panama?" asked Julie, in surprise.

"I've already secured your tickets for that trip," laughed Mr. Alsop.

"It would be corking if you took us there in aeroplanes," suggested Joan.

"It would be a corking cost, too," retorted the director.

"I suppose it would cost an awful lot to build a stage scene of the Panama Canal and all we'd have to have for that trip of ours," ventured Julie thoughtfully.

"Now what's getting ready to be broad-casted from that too active radio station in your head?" asked Mr. Alsop.

"Well, I was figuring that should you charge up the cost of building sets of the Canal, and charge up the cost of aeroplane trips to Panama; then credit the stage scenes with free rides to the Canal, what the difference would be."

"I don't quite get you there, Miss Jule," said Mr. Berger. "Would you mind saying that again—a bit more simplified?"

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"I mean, how much would it cost to prepare scenery for the Canal pictures? And how much would our hotel bills be while at Panama, doing the necessary pictures there. Now, credit yourself, or the trip, via aeroplanes, with the free voyage for us, and then what?"

"Who is talking of free voyages in aeroplanes?" asked several of her hearers.

"I am. You see, if Rex does his aeroplane work for the scene of John Dunstan's story to Verny, and invites his comrades to come over and assist him in the battle scene in France, we girls ought to make things so pleasant and agreeable for the aviators that they'd want to see us again. Then, we might hint at our desire to sail to the Canal in aeroplanes. Wouldn't that work out fine?"

Everyone laughed, and Rex added, "You're some fixer, all right, Julie."

"If I weren't, how do you suppose the Dandelioners ever would have grown so far as the Pacific Coast—and in Hollywood, at that!" demanded she.

"Here's one member of the Troop who wouldn't be in that aviation picnic," now said Mrs. Vernon.

"Afraid—oh, no, Verny! I know it's not that," said Joan.

"No, not that," agreed the Captain. "But I prefer keeping my reasons a personal matter."

"Julie," now said Betty, "here's another one who won't go in an aeroplane. I couldn't stand sailing through the clouds up there." As she spoke she turned her blue eyes upward, to wonder if those clouds were very hard, when you bumped into them.

"We wouldn't want you to stand while sailing, Betty," returned her sister. "It would be safer for you to remain seated."

"I mean, I just couldn't do it. Why, there isn't a least thing one can catch hold of, if the plane starts falling," was Betty's explanation.

This caused a merry laugh, and the subject changed to one of more immediate work—that of Sandy's Forest Ranger's picture. But Rex had been given a hint, and the more he thought of it the more feasible the scheme mentioned by Julie seemed to be. Anyway, he would inquire and see what could be done in that way.

At the hotel that evening Mrs. Vernon received a letter from her husband, in which he said: "Fairfax and Henderson are going with our host on an extra week's trip into Mexico, about some land deal. But Gilly and I are starting for Los Angeles tomorrow, and we hope to be with you on Friday of

this week. You might tell the boys, Junior, John and Faxy, that they have an extra weeks reprieve before saying good-by to the scouts and leaving for home."

Mrs. Vernon read the letter aloud to the two ladies, Mrs. Fairfax and Mrs. Henderson, and then went in search of the young people, to convey the news to them.

"Then Gilly will be here to take his own part in the Movies, of the Redwoods," said Ruth.

"And Tally—is he coming back with V. and Gilly?" asked Betty.

"We suppose so," replied the Captain. "Where Gilly is, there will Tally be found likewise."

At breakfast, the next morning, Sandy had news for the scouts. "I received a telephone call this morning, saying my director of the Educational Films wished to get some pictures of the homes of Forest Rangers, and he asked me to suggest a good one.

"I told him that there were several between here and on the Lookout where I stopped. So he left it to my decision—where to go for the interior, and at the same time to run some footage of forest scenes. I mentioned you scouts, and he begged of me to induce you to accompany us. He is willing

to pay each one ten dollars a day for your 'mob' scenes." As Sandy said "mob" he smiled and the girls laughed, for they had witnessed too many mob scenes now to mistake what that meant in the movies.

"And so you agreed to furnish the extras providing you got your regular agents' commission, eh?" laughed Mrs. Vernon.

"I didn't tell him what my commission would be, but I have no objection to telling you-all," retorted Sandy, his glance going in Julie's direction.

"What about our own pictures, if we break away to go with Sandy?" asked Julie, having seen the look in Sandy's eyes.

"Oh, one day's rest won't kill the work," said Faxy, who thought it would be great fun to act in Sandy's picture.

"But the director may have something very special on for the same day Sandy wants us to go with him," argued Julie.

"We can easily fix that. You know, working in Hollywood is a joke with really strenuous people," explained Rex. "There are visitors, who come to see how pictures are made, who have said they would not be surprised to hear of all the companies going bankrupt—because they pay such high salaries

for letting the actors loaf around the Lot. You scouts have been here long enough now to judge for yourselves whether a pleasant jaunt to the woods would be condemned by your directors. Or don't you think they would quickly consent to accompany Sandy's people? Their excuse would be, naturally, that they wish to see if any new stunts are discovered, while on the stage."

"I do believe Mr. Berger would go too!" exclaimed Joan.

"Try him and see!" laughed Rex. "And don't forget Alsop."

Thus it followed that on the morning of Sandy's engagement with his directors to go to a forest preserve within easy motoring distance of Los Angeles, the entire group of scouts followed, with their two directors in their cars. It promised to develop into a picnic, if one could judge from the hampers of food and the merry laughter of all concerned in this outing.

They had started away very early in order to reach the Station before the nine o'clock drill. Sandy had described this daily practise to his director, and the man declared they must have it in the picture. Therefore the cars pulled up before the Forest Ranger's Lookout Station shortly before

nine o'clock; and Sandy presented himself to the fine-looking, green-clad men, then introduced his companions, and mentioned the mission of their being there.

The Forest Rangers were delighted to learn they were to take star leads in a picture of their mode of living in the Lookout; and the director soon had the camera grinding out footage of the scenes.

"In the following scenes of outdoor activities I think Mr. Sanderson will have to direct himself," announced Mr. Alsop, who was considered an authority on such work, and had been appealed to by Sandy's own director, to express an opinion on the work.

"That's a good suggestion, Alsop, because we know our own limitations, even as we know our business. Movies, as we know them, are not the same as running a forest fire," returned Mr. Kreese, the director.

So Sandy was told to go ahead and say what ought to be done, and order everything he wished done.

"All right then. First I would advise us to get all the good forest scenery you will need for atmosphere; then have us do any kind of acting you want, just to fill our souls with mental pictures

of forest life. After we are well saturated with this environment we will respond better to the surprise, that a fire has been discovered in the vicinity of our forest camp."

Everyone present understood the psychology of this advice, and the directors worked accordingly. The cars followed the woodland trails until they reached a beautiful spot where the camera could reel off pictures as ideally perfect as any in Europe or other lands. While the camera-men were doing this, the scouts unpacked the hampers, and the men started a fire over which the soup and other food could be heated.

Finally the call to dinner sounded and all gathered in a circle, being careful to leave a gap in the circle through which the camera's eye could take the pictures. No rehearsing was necessary, because the scene was perfectly natural, and the individuals taking part in the scene were so natural, too.

When the director felt satisfied with the pictures, he and his helpers joined the merry group around the generous dinner.

"When we finish here," said Mr. Kreese, "you girls will clear away the food, and the boys will pack the dishes and place them in the cars. Then you will start to find your places in the cars and drive

off, leaving the camp fire burning. We will see to it that our close-ups show the ashes smoldering slowly; then as a breeze springs up the fire burns more brightly. At last, long after you have departed from the spot (as the text will tell you) the wind fans the embers into a blaze, and this begins to lick up all the tinder or debris within its reach. Then a bush ignites, and this starts a young pine tree burning. And soon, a devouring forest fire is raging.

"This is the time for Mr. Sanderson to come with his men to put out the fire. The camera will show the Rangers in their Lookout, getting the signals; then we will switch back to the signal towers and show the man operating the board. Next we will have the men hasten for their implements. Some will start off in a car, and some on horses, to reach the place where the Lookout discovered the fire."

"That's simple enough," admitted Sandy. "I shall have no difficulty in acting that part, since it is more *real* than *reel* to me."

The picnic dinner ended, and the entire party began to prepare as directed, to leave the spot, forgetting all about the camp fire. The camera then took a rear view of the receding automobiles, and

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then took a last shot at them as they left the trail and turned into the road which would lead to a highway.

The close-up of the embers was taken, but the cars by this time were coming back with the scouts, who wished to watch all the proceedings.

"Now use that electric fan to blow up the sparks in the camp fire," ordered Mr. Kreese. "And camera—be ready to get that bit."

"We won't do the actual blaze of the pine tree here, but we will fix that up at the studio. We are not taking any chances with any forest fire in the real," finally added he.

"Shall I start away now to call the Rangers to come?" asked Sandy, after the close-ups of the camp fire were finished.

"Wait till I get all the men placed O.K. with their smudges, to make the smoke, and the other chaps with the red powder to burn," replied Mr. Kreese.

"I wondered why you brought so many workmen with you in that truck," remarked the Captain, seeing the men waiting, with their tools, to go as directed and line up where the pines grew close and erect. Back of these tree trunks these men would build the smudge fires and create a dense smoke

which would make an audience swear the entire forest was soon to be consumed by fire. Then when a good picture of the scene was gotten, the smudges would be very carefully destroyed and the forest would remain intact, as it had been.

The men were stationed, and the smudges and powder were waiting to turn their tricks for the movies, when Sandy was told to find the nearest signal and call up the Lookout.

The scouts were grouped out of range of the camera, watching with smiles this method of having a forest fire, when they distinctly heard some one shout "Fire! fire!"

"Sandy sure has a far-reaching voice," laughed Rex, then he stretched out upon the nice cool moss and waited for developments.

"I didn't think he had had time to get to the signal-pole," returned one of the directors.

"Oh, he knows how to sprint, believe me!" said Faxy.

Again came the shouting of some one: "Fire! fire!" and immediately after that the Captain lifted her nose and sniffed audibly.

The scouts saw the action and heard her sniff, but they thought she was acting, and they laughed accordingly and applauded.

"I really meant that, girls. Do you smell smoke?" said she.

"Of course not, Verny," retorted Julie.

"Why, you are so saturated with the atmosphere Sandy mentioned, that you think you can smell smoke," teased Ruth.

Mrs. Vernon said no more then, but she was not convinced that it was all "atmosphere" of the *reel* kind. Immediately after her decision to hold her peace, came a wild hare leaping down the trail. After the hare came a very young timber wolf, but strange to say this enemy of the bunnies seemed perfectly indifferent to the dinner so close in front of him. Both hare and wolf kept on their way, leaping in concentrated manner along the trail, and neither turning to the right to wonder at the scouts, nor to the left to register fear of the camera. The camera-man was grinding footage, however, because the unique incident was well worth picturing.

Before anyone had had time to express an opinion regarding the race between the hare and the wolf, a whirring overhead drew the eyes of the party aloft. There a flock of birds was seen flying swiftly in the direction of the city. A few stragglers flying in the vanguard kept turning their heads ever and anon as they flew.

Then Mrs. Vernon sniffed again and stood up. "I just know I smell smoke. And I'm going up on that knoll to see if there is any cause for this strange exodus. I remember that fire in the Rockies."

"We'll go with you!" declared Betty, jumping up and looking at her sister for consent.

Before another word could be voiced, however, Sandy was seen racing back towards them, his hands gesticulating in his excitement. As he came within speaking distance, he shouted through cupped hands: "Get ready! the real thing. I saw it from the top of the signal post."

He joined them and breathlessly explained.

"Come, rush the cameras up to that knoll. You'll see a fire such as we seldom have so close to the populated sections of the country."

He helped the directors and soon all were packed in a few cars and racing for the knoll, which the Captain had wished to climb a short time before.

Here they all saw a sight never before witnessed in the real, though pictures of such fires had been shown in *reel* work.

From the other side of the knoll the land descended gradually to a valley which was thinly covered with young pine. A broad highway ran

through this valley, north and south, and both sides of the road had been cleared of brush and forest growth, so that it made a safety line for the forest this side of it. The far side of the road rose in a form of terraced forest to the top, which was very high. A serpentine woodland road could be seen winding its cleft up that mountain side, and about two-thirds of the way to the top a wild fire could be seen eating its way upward.

"Camera! camera!" yelled all directors at once. And Rex added: "Don't miss a thing as we race along this trail to get closer to it."

Sandy was in the first car, driving like a mad man, and the other drivers followed close behind. The camera-man sat beside the Forest Ranger in the front seat, and Rex crouched just behind him. The directors and Julie were jammed in the back. How she managed to jump into that automobile, when the men sprang in and started it going before they had taken their seats, is a caution! But she wanted to "saturate" herself with atmosphere, she said later, and there was no telling how soon that fire might be vanquished by the Rangers.

Down the hill-side they drove, and into the highway that divided the valley. Then along this highway, where a few cars were stalled, the occupants

watching the amazing scene of the fire, went the movie men.

Several Lookouts had reported the blaze, and from all directions now poured Forest Rangers, and Volunteers, with shovels, picks, and other implements, eager to fight the enemy of the Western forests.

Sandy left the car the moment he had brought it close to the woodland road going up, and finding an unoccupied motor-cycle leaning against a tree beside the road, he quickly appropriated it. In another moment the scouts saw him steer the machine straight for the steep grade of the mountain road, and then he could be seen tearing up that ascent.

"Camera! camera!" shouted all the scouts together; however, the man was not missing one foot of this scene. The directors were busy with the "extra" camera and man, planning how they might reach the place where the fire was raging.

"If you had only thought of having Sandy take you on as passengers," said Faxy, who stood listening to the directors' plans.

"Or had we one of our 'planes here," said Mr. Berger."

"How could we tell there would be such a scene?" wailed Mr. Alsop.

As though Fate wished to please the directors that day Rex now heard the familiar whirring of wings and all gazed in the direction of the sound. Over the tree-tops, coming from the direction of the Aviation Field of the Pacific Coast, came a huge aeroplane.

Rex snatched the field glasses from Mr. Berger's hands and quickly directed them upwards. Aloud he read the number plainly seen on the side of the 'plane, and then he shouted excitedly.

"It's Burry! it's Burry! Here, give me a gun—some one—and let me signal him."

Mr. Kreese shoved a revolver into the outstretched hand, and Rex lifted it over his head and pulled the trigger three times in quick succession, then three times at intervals.

Immediately the aviator slowed up somewhat and Julie, holding the discarded glasses to her eyes, could see a man gazing down upon them.

"Wave your arms, Rex! Do something, to show him you know who he is," screamed Julie, in great excitement.

Then Rex whipped out a handkerchief and did some signalling that way. Soon the man up above signalled with a white flag.

"He saw me! He recognized one of our codes in

the War," cried Rex, dancing around in his pleasure.

"There he comes! Oh, where can he land?" cried Julie, standing up in the vacated car and trying to clamber over the back of the front seat.

They had not long to wait for that answer to her query, because the aviator with unusual daring swept along just skimming the highway, and finally came to rest directly up on the broad road.

Before the other scouts could count three, Rex, was racing to introduce himself; and the director with the camera and one man, were bounding along to ask a lift up the mountain side to the fire scene.

"Then what?" asked Burry, whose proper name was Kirk Burrleigh. "Where can we drop you once we arrive up there?"

"Don't drop us anywhere," returned Rex. "Just carry us as near as possible, and the camera will do the rest."

"Jump in," said Burry, and Rex got in, then took the camera and helped Kreesse to climb in. Before they were actually seated, the 'plane started its motor; and before Julie, who was going to get a kodak shot at the scene, could focus her camera, the craft rose and began to soar fire-ward.

The only thing left for the scouts to do then was

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to sit in the automobiles and watch the flight and the fire.

The aeroplane circled around and around, close above the blazing pines, and many a wonderful picture was taken of the scene. And Sandy, with his numerous Forest Rangers to assist, did such heroic work that the area of fire was soon limited and at last the conflagration was completely quenched.

At the first showing of that picture in the projection room were all the scouts and all the Rangers who had played their parts so nobly without signing up for a pay slip.

And then, to the delight of everyone who knew and liked Sandy, it was seen that he was the most conspicuous figure in the entire length of footage, which was reeled off for the benefit of those who were not of the critical public.



Julie was in the first car which Sandy was driving like a madman.



CHAPTER XI

GILLY IS STARRED

ON Friday came Mr. Vernon and Mr. Gilroy. Also came Tally, but he would not be required for his part in the movies, until the girl scouts in the scenario reach Denver. Then he would begin his anticipated acting.

Gilly and V. had heard about the forest fire and the wonderful pictures taken of it from the aeroplane. Then V. heard how the aviator, Burry, was a friend of Rex Hamilton's. At this point of the story, the Captain interrupted and told her husband who Rex really was.

"Well," continued Julie, after Mrs. Vernon had had her say, "Rex asked Burry to come and dine with us that night, and he came."

"Yes, and he conquered!" added the Captain, meaningly.

"What do you mean? which girl did he conquer?" asked V. laughingly.

"All of them. Even the boys fell for him," said Sandy.

"Is he then so wonderful?" asked Gilly. "Hand-somer and more gallant than I?"

"You?" chorused the feminine portion of the group, and the masculine contingent laughed appreciatively at their expressions.

"Anyway, let me finish my story, won't you?" demanded Julie. Then when order had been restored, she went on to say: "Rex fixed it up with Burry, and we are all to visit the Field some day soon, and be invited to take a ride in an aeroplane."

"Well, now, that's going some!" declared Gilly.

"It will be, when we get up high over your head," said she.

"I suppose you will look down upon me then. I shall be a mere nobody to you scouts," returned Gilly.

His play on words caused a general laugh, and Julie said: "I hadn't completed my story. Listen to this: Burry and Rex are going to arrange a marvelous scene down at Panama. You know where the great fields stretch out from the Canal to the very borders of the old City of Panama? well, that is where the picture of the battle scene between the German and the American 'planes will be done again. And we scouts are invited to take the trip in the

'planes, and have our picture, of us going through the Canal, done right on the locale! How's that for a surprise party, Gilly and V.?"

"I'll tell the world it is some, and *then* some!" laughed Mr. Gilroy. But he never hinted at a letter he had received from Mrs. Vernon, in which she spoke of this plan and was dreadfully concerned about it. That letter brought V. and Gilly back sooner than they might have come.

"When does his round-trip excursion take place?" asked Gilly.

"Next week. We figured it would take you three days at least to do the Blue Beard's Cave scene, and how we rescued you. That brings us to Monday evening. If we could start Tuesday, we could do the scenes down there and start back again next week following," said Julie.

"But you count the Sunday as a working day in my scene, and you forget I never break the Sabbath Day," demurred Gilly.

"No, you never break it, but you crush it completely," retorted Joan.

Everyone laughed, then the Captain said: "There need be no rush about this aeroplane outing, that I can see."

"Only that Rex wants to get this war picture in,

while he is out of work," explained Betty, in her funny way.

"And I need the money it will give me," added Rex, in a pitiful tone, causing his hearers to laugh.

"Then let us wait a few days, at least. Gilly will want ample time for himself, in which to practise his scenes; and this idea of rushing him, in order to sail away to Panama, might ruin his self-confidence," explained the Captain.

"No, nothing could do that!" added Mr. Vernon.

"But I will require more than two working days to do my little act in a cute and cunning way," lisped Gilly, his nonsense diverting the scouts from the subject of the Panama trip.

Contrary to plans and expectations, however, the stage where the woodland hut was standing could not be used by the scouts for several days; another picture was being filmed, and the hut had been in use daily for a week. Then the scene which was being constructed to represent Blue Beard's Cave was not completed that Saturday for Gilly to use, and everything had to be postponed until the next week.

Monday morning the scouts began their picture of the visit to Blue Beard's Cave. And thereafter, all went well in the play. Gilly behaved himself—

that is, he registered well, and was pronounced a success in photography. But all was not yet over for poor Gilly!

The work had continued nicely, until it reached the scene in the cave, where the outlaws discover the tourist in the stalactite caverns. The acting of this part of the scene was an innovation by Mr. Berger. He suggested having a vision, of the two escaped convicts seizing and beating up their victim, then taking his money and other valuables, and leaving him back in the farthest end of the cave to die. The vision was meant to impress the audience with the idea that the assaulted man was in a semi-conscious condition after experiencing this attack and beating. Then the scouts would come in and find him.

It was proposed by Julie that Mr. Vernon make up and play the part of one of the convicts, but he positively refused the offer.

"If I am not important enough to appear in the *Great Current News Weekly*, I will not agree to sell my face to the scouts," he declared.

"Oh, you flatter yourself!" retorted Julie. "We had no idea of rewarding you financially for showing your face. We had an idea you would consider the filming of your face a good stunt in advertising

for your lumber, so that you'd pay us for the publicity."

"So! you think I'm a wooden head, eh? Well, I'll show you what I am!" declared Mr. Vernon, pretending to express deep annoyance.

"Oh, V.," now said Betty, hoping to pour oil on troubled waters, "I'm quite sure thoughtless Julie didn't mean to hurt your feelings, when she spoke of advertising your face for lumber."

A howl of laughter greeted this explanation, and Gilly said they had better resume the work, or the Aviators would lose out.

After this the act continued at a lively pace. The two boys, Junior and John Henderson offered to play the parts of convicts. They were made up and had their faces lined and smeared until they looked like most desperate characters indeed in striped uniforms.

Then the set of Blue Beard's Cave was ready and the scene therein began. As the camera started grinding Mr. Gilroy was discovered in the Cave, hunting around and picking up bits of queer rock for his specimen box. He went farther and farther into the cave and finally his flashlight brought out a sight that made him stop short.

Two escaped convicts were huddling against the

wall. They saw him, and he knew they had seen him, even as he had seen them. Then they came over, pretending to ask the way to a certain farm, and begging a small sum of money to secure food for themselves.

But even while Mr. Gilroy began to answer them, one sprang upon him, and the other used a great club and beat him over the head. The acting was splendid, and the camera was grinding away merrily, when all of a sudden the convict with the club dropped it and cried aloud, and the two combatants, victim and convict, disappeared from view.

"What's happened?" yelled Mr. Berger, dropping his megaphone and climbing over every obstacle to reach the dim interior of the Cave. But Junior had disappeared also, and, before the amazed onlookers could reach the Cave, he was dragging Mr. Gilroy up through the hole in the ground.

"This is a fine trick to play," grumbled Mr. Gilroy, rubbing his head tenderly. "Here you hire me to star in this Cave scene and then you make me see stars to boot! I didn't sign up for that kind of starring."

John Henderson crawled out of the hole alone, and then the audience heard what had happened to cut the scene so short.

Mr. Gilroy had been trying to battle with his assailant and John was using every bit of brawn to keep Gilly from getting the best of him, when both heard a crackling under them, and the pit yawned to receive both. Down they went, as dumbfounded as later the audience was.

Upon investigation it was discovered that the scene builder in building up the steep incline that led to the farthest end of the cave had neglected to have the carpenter brace up the papier-mâché rocks with two-by-fours underneath. And the carpenter, seeing the cardboard cave finished, never dreamed that there were no trestles under it.

It stood up all right with the weight of one young man, because he remained standing quietly in a corner; but when double weight came upon the thin canvas flooring, and then both men fell and rolled over upon the empty space under the painted cave, it gave way.

Gilly had such a huge lump over one eye, where his forehead had struck a beam, that he could not appear again in his own act until his face would register anything but a prize-fighter's phiz. So that was the end of Gilly's starring.

Well it was for the progress of the pictures that the following scenes could be done with a dummy

for Gilly. So the scouts carried a stuffed figure from the cave; carefully placed it upon the old buckboard and drove Hepsy to the camp; and then took tender care of the effigy of Mr. Gilroy.

"How pathetic it is to think that I am missing all your sweet attentions now, and have to stand by and see them wasted upon a chunk of clothes and hay," said Gilly.

"I don't see why you couldn't do the act. Your head with that beautiful rainbow swelling on it would make the picture all the more true to life," said Julie.

After the Cave scene, Mr. Berger wished to connect up to this climax, a number of scenes done previously. So Mr. Gilroy was excused until all the smaller acts were done.

One morning, after the Cave scene had been completed, Mr. Alsop proposed: "Now, if that head is normal again, we will have you help us out in the Adirondacks."

"I have been thinking, Boss," said Mr. Berger, when all the scouts were waiting for the choosing of another scene to be pictured, "that this set of the woodland could be used to advantage for that chapter in the story where the mules, Frolic and Jolt, run away with the camping outfits. Then, too, it

can be used for the night of the storm; also when the old bear is discovered—that time the dog Scrub captured the cubs, you know.”

“But we had lots of rain, the night of the awful storm,” said Betty, surprised that the director had forgotten such an important detail.

“You shall have rain also,—all you want of it,” laughed Mr. Alsop, who was Betty’s sworn cavalier. He had said he had never known such a sweet and innocent girl until he met her.

Betty looked up at the sky, where the sun was shining brightly, and wondered how that could be possible. Rex laughed and ventured to explain to her.

“You see, we do it this way, Betzy. For this camp scene, where the wind howls and the rain pours down, there will be a number of water-pipes arranged over the set, and these will be constantly filled from a tank built at one side, higher than the pipes. When the stop-cock is turned on full the rain will pour out of the rows of small holes that perforate the under side of the pipes. If we want it to merely sprinkle, the water is only turned on part way. The storm, in its fury, or in its weakness, is governed entirely by the faucet.

“Now for the gale: there will be one of those

propellers, like the one we used for the whipping of the water in the tank, to represent the rapids and whirlpool,—in the canoe scene, you know,—which will be directed at the camp scene, and blow things into the next county unless you nail them down. Now is that clear to you?"

Betty laughed merrily at the idea of camping while rain, manipulated by mere man, fell from rows of pipes.

"Oh! let's have the rain scene first," begged Hester, in a pleasant shiver of anticipation.

"But we haven't the storm-clouds arranged yet," said Mr. Berger.

"And the plumbers are busy to-day on another set," added Mr. Alsop. "However, we will place the order to have the rain-pipes ready for day after to-morrow."

"I'd just as soon have the bear-cub scene now," said Joan. "But we have no bears."

"You'll find it easier to have bear-cubs discovered in the woodland scene, where the old mother has been killed, than it will be to have Scrub, your dog, behave himself in the act," laughed Rex.

"Do you keep animals, as well as actors?" asked Betty.

The tone and expression caused the others to

laugh at her question. Then Mr. Alsop explained.

"We often borrow pet animals from the Zoo in Los Angeles. Of course, we have many individuals who have trained animals, who come and have their pets do certain stunts for us in the pictures. We pay them exactly as we pay an extra, by the day; unless there is to be a feature picture in which an animal plays an important part. Then we arrange with the owner for the entire time the picture will take to produce."

"If we decide to do the bear scene to-morrow, I'd best telephone the man at the Zoo and see if we can have a loan of two cubs," said Mr. Berger.

"What about the big mother bear?" asked Ruth.

"Oh, we will use a dummy for her," was the director's reply. "We have a fine stuffed bear in our warehouse, which is often used in scenes, just as that fawn in the Adirondacks was used."

That day the scene of the mules' runaway was made. To the scouts' amazement two mules very like Jolt and Frolic were procured, and the camp outfits packed upon them. Then the scene, of the experience when the animals ran away, began. The girls lived again, but in more appreciative humor, the funny episodes which happened on that trail down the Rocky Mountain side. Tally played the star

part in the picture, beginning with the scene when Jolt disappeared during the night, and had to be sought for, in the morning, before the scouts could trek onward.

The ridiculous acting—so it seemed to the girls—of coming up, on the stage, to register dismay at hearing Jolt had vanished; then going down Main Street, to reach another stage, where a different woodland scene was set for them, and marching through the artificial forest, seeking this side and that side of the trail for signs of the mule; they wandered from the right of the stage to the left side and finally made an exit entirely; then went down Main Street once more, to another stage, where still another woodland scene was waiting; and to come into this with but this difference, they found Jolt now, enjoying his freedom and they all registered great surprise. It was so funny that the scouts were convulsed with laughter, and many delays were necessary in order to sober up the faces which should be registering concern and trouble.

Then the lassoing of Jolt! That was funny, too.

Tally tried to have the mule act fractious, but the poor animal preferred to stretch out and bask in the light of the Klieg. It became necessary, therefore, for one of the supers to use the gun loaded with salt,

and to shoot the lazy creature. Instantly, then, Jolt sprang up and began kicking, even as the original mule had done. When he tried to escape and run away, Tally did a beautiful bit of work in lassoing him.

Then the entire party turned and back-trailed to camp, Tally holding the mule securely by the rope. In back-trailing, the party had to return to the former scenes, and here they marched across stage, the camera grinding away as it kept moving opposite them in the open.

The next important scene would be that one where Jolt became wedged between the two pine trees; and Frolic threw herself down and rolled and kicked upon the ground, endangering the camp utensils and the food.

For this scene the mules were led to the last scene, where the papier-mâché trees had been hastily rearranged to present a different picture from that one where Jolt had been lassoed.

Now poor Jolt became the star. He was compelled to pass down the trail, when his inclination would have led him in the opposite direction. Then he had to go between the two huge tree-trunks, but he stubbornly wished to avoid these obstructions in the pathway. Again and again he had to re-

hearse this part, to the great amusement of the audience lined up behind the camera.

At last, however, it seemed he was docile and comprehending, and Mr. Berger was relieved. Jolt started straight, headed for the pathway between the two trees, and the director called "camera!"

The frequent jarring against the artificial trees during the practise of the mule must have loosened the hold the workmen had given them when building up the set. Now when Jolt got wedged between the two larger trees, the one nearest the scout group came out of the hole in which it had been stuck, and over it fell, making a swift plunge for the line of girls gaping beside the director.

Julie instantly saw what would follow, and she sprang aside, even as she grasped Betty's dress which was the nearest object her hands found. At the same time she screamed a warning, but too late!

Julie tripped over a heavy coil of rope in her pathway, and fell headlong against the tripod of the camera, carrying it down with her; Betty rolled over her, because Julie's clutch on Betty's dress still held good. The papier-mâché tree struck Hester first, then bounded against Ruth's head, and at last knocked Joan down flat upon the floor. The top of the pine, with its make-believe branches pro-

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jecting as far as the picture needed them to show, raked in, on both sides, the others that stood within its reach. Over they toppled, but great was the scramble before they succumbed to the laws of gravitation.

As luck would have it it happened that another camera-man was passing the stage at that identical moment when the artificial pine began to waver in its allegiance to the make-believe earth. He saw the possibility of catching a laughable scene and quickly adjusted his instrument. He started grinding about the time the tree came down, and the record of that unexpected scene was successfully made.

No one in the cast suspected that a picture had been made of that act, so that when all were invited to the projecting-room to see the release of the film, how surprised they were to sit and see their laughable antics in that forest episode.

CHAPTER XII

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CLIMAXES

THE lesser scenes, in trailing the mountains with Tally and Omney as guides for the scout party, were accomplished without further accident, or cause for comedy. And the day ended with the girls' declaration of relief after so much "patch-work" acting, as Julie termed it.

"You'll need safety pins by the wholesale, to connect all those various scenes into one strip," laughed Joan.

"Yes, we are seriously considering the economy of building a factory, where the safety pins can be manufactured right on the Lot," returned Mr. Berger.

Then the scouts bid him good-night, and started for their automobiles, to drive back to the hotel. On the way to Los Angeles Rex informed the girls that he had heard from his friend at the Aviation Field. The scouts were all attention at once, to hear the news.

"He wrote that the proposition of staging the

war scene in France would be favored by the men, but it would have to be arranged somewhere near the Field. They will not listen to any plan of having so many men off to the Canal Zone without orders from the Bureau; and that, you know, would be impossible for us to get, for such a cause," explained Rex.

"But they said they would agree to do the battle scene?" asked Mrs. Vernon eagerly.

"Yes, they rather delighted in the plan," said Rex.

"That will have to wait now," said Gilly, "until these Rocky Mountain scenes are finished; because Berger has completed all arrangements for us to have the water-pipes at our camp scene for the day after to-morrow; and the Zoo agreed to have two bear cubs over on the Lot to-morrow. Then we are to go out in automobiles, to an appropriate forest scene, and get the rest of our pictures, of the experiences in the Rockies, up to the time we started the canoe trip down the rapids."

"But the forest scenes can wait, I should think, in case the aviators send us word to come on and do the scenes of the battle," said Rex.

"Well, you have more drag with the directors than we have, so you try to fix up the thing," said Mr. Gilroy.

Tired as the girls had said they were, when Mr. Berger declared that work for that day was over, they forgot all their fatigue and their vows to go to bed directly after dinner, because a telephone message was handed Rex, upon his arrival at the hotel, to announce the coming of a bevy of aviators for a visit to the Dandelioners.

"Oh, we must run up and dress before dinner," cried Joan.

"Are they to be here for dinner?" asked Mr. Gilroy; thinking he would arrange for extra guests, if they were expected to dine.

"No, no! Kirk says they will be here about eight, but they want you-all to dine with them somewhere. He thought we might go to one of the attractive places where dancing as well as dinner is to be enjoyed. I told them the scouts were regular knock-outs, where dancing was concerned," answered Rex.

The girls laughed, and the Captain frowned. "Rex, I'm not favorably inclined to having my wards working all day, and then off to a gay resort at night, to skip-hop-and-jump until morn with a group of fascinating men in uniform—as I suppose they will be, eh?"

"Oh! not to-night, when they are permitted to dress in civilian's clothes," returned Rex eagerly.

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Then followed such a clamor of scouts' voices begging, coaxing and declaring themselves, that Mr. Gilroy shook his head despairingly and held his hands over his ears in mock fear of his hearing.

Finally Mrs. Vernon consented to the dinner party, and a *few* dances. "Mind you, that doesn't mean half the night, either!"

Off went the scouts to embellish their natural charms as much as possible; and the younger members of the male sex excepting Rex, who went to reply to his telephone call, started more deliberately for their rooms. On the way Faxy said to Sandy: "I don't like this idea of ringing in all those deucedly fine chaps from the Aviation Field. Where do I get off with the girls, when those fellows have the handicap in their handsome uniforms?"

"But you heard Rex say they would not be in uniform," said Sandy.

"That's only for to-night. But these chaps will become well acquainted with the girls at this party, and then, when they do appear in uniform, they will do their best to give us the 'fade'," grumbled Faxy.

"Well, cousin, all I can say to this, is what I've said before, advice I have followed as much as possible myself: every chap for his own girl, and see to

it that no purloiner can oust him. Now I am going to see to it that Julie is my partner for dinner, for dancing, and for the return drive to the hotel. Let one of those charming fellows from the Aviation Field dare to tear her from my side!"

"I shall rejoice in watching you tear him then," laughed Faxy, glaring at his cousin; but at the same time he was planning how he would win the object of the "tearing" during that engagement.

As the hands of the great hall clock of the hotel neared eight, the Dandelion Scouts trooped through the hallway from the elevator, and joined the young escorts who were waiting in the lounge. Introductions to the aviators followed and Mrs. Vernon heaved a deep sigh of relief: not one of these newcomers was so good-looking as the young admirers who had been hooked to the party ever since their visit in the Redwoods. In her estimation, Sandy was perfectly safe, because Julie had known him so long, and thus far she had never evinced the slightest inclination to fall in love with the Forest Ranger.

"Now I shall be able to enjoy myself, too," whispered Mrs. Vernon to her husband and Mr. Gilroy, as the young people hurried to the waiting cars in front of the hotel.

"You might change your mind about these aviators, when they all meet the scouts again, with the added attractions of aeroplanes and uniforms," remarked Gilly.

"Clothes sure make the man—if it is a natty uniform," added Mr. Vernon. "I honestly believe that two thirds of the engagements and marriages consummated during our War, were the result of the neat and attractive showing the boys in uniform made, to the admiring eyes of the female contingent."

"Not a very substantial and enduring cause for future bliss and contentment," declared the Captain feelingly.

"That may be the reason we are recording so many divorces since the War," suggested Mr. Gilroy: "Statistics show that the Courts of our Land have issued twice as many divorces in the last seven years as in all the quarter century before the ending of the War. Marrying a chap who looks alluring in uniform, or evening dress, and then seeing that same chap as your husband, dressed in working clothes, or shabby office suits, are quite different phases of love and life. Then, too, the silly girls who are taken in by appearances, are not generally fitted to see any real virtue in their husbands, when

the glamour wears off. Imagine the life of such a pair! Bound to drag through life, one pulling this way and one pulling that way. Better far, to sever the yoke—unless there are children. That is where the awful pity of such mismating comes in. I would like to exhort all parents to keep peace at any personal price, because they are sworn to their children, who are the hostages in a home, to protect and shelter them, until they are of an age to leave the nest and fly for themselves. But it does not seem to have any effect on parents: even mothers, who are claimed to love their children as no one but God can love, are wantonly destroying the necessary homelife of these children, by demanding their legal freedom. Oh, the pity of such acts of parents against Truth!"

Mr. Gilroy's long lament over conditions as they seem to be in the world to-day, started the Captain and Mr. Vernon replying to him. And the entire drive from their hotel, to the charming Inn in the suburbs, where the party was to be given, was filled with such serious conversation.

"Well, here they are at last!" called a merry voice, as the Captain's motor came to a stop at the curb, where the scouts were waiting.

"My, oh my!" exclaimed Julie, seeing Mrs. Ver-

non's face, then glimpsing the expressions on Gilly's and V.'s faces. "What has happened to our darling little trio?"

Her manner caused the others to laugh, and instantly the three heavy hearts of the Trio lightened and they laughed too.

That was a merry party that night, and despite the Captain's command, that only a few dances be enjoyed by the tired scouts, they managed to keep on their toes until midnight.

And Sandy, who had sworn to keep Julie for his own little party that night, found she preferred Gilly and V. to the younger admirers this night. Therefore Faxy had no opportunity to try out his secret plan to secure Julie, when Sandy and the aviator—whichever one it happened to be—were locked in each other's arms struggling over the prize. So two very sulky young friends finally followed the Dandelioners out to their cars, and these two refused to be comforted by the fact that Julie had played safe all evening.

The following day the bear cubs arrived and were made much of by the actors in the scout scene about to be played. The cubs were darling things, and as playful as puppies.

"Just exactly like our own bears were," cried

Betty, eager to hold them both in her arms at the same time, but a trifle timid, too.

The trained dog now came down Main Street, and then arrived at the stage where the scene would be shot. That morning was given to hitching up several minor scenes in the story, to the proper places, and then the scene where Scrub hunts and finds the cubs began. The acting of this wire-haired fox terrier was wonderful, and the private audience of scouts thrilled at every stunt the canine performed.

The cubs knew nothing of training or filming, yet they sniffed cunningly at the stuffed skin of the bear supposed to be their mother; and one of them even tried to paw her over upon her side, in order to let her know he was starving for his dinner. This scene was so natural that everyone cried "Bravo!"

Now came the call for Omney to trail the dog through the forest, and the scouts to come on and, following with Tally, discover the dog where he had been guarding the cubs all night. The scene of the barking dog and the excited little cubs was perfect, and the camera-man ground away with a will, to get all the natural motions of the animals.

Then came the time when one of the cubs had to be tied to a tree until the second cub could be caught.

But these bears had never been subjected to such annoying experiences and they began to display instinctive resentment, and to show their sharp little claws.

Then came the scene where the scouts were to go on in advance of the cubs and tempt them along by means of holding bits of candy out before their noses. Tally held the rope that harnessed the bears, and kept them from springing forward at the sweets in front of them.

The scouts marched thus, across one woodland stage, then on to the other, and across that one. Men were quickly shifting pine trees and rocks and bushes, to change the scenery, thus permitting the actors to walk back, and to cross the same stage with its new setting. This was done until Julie shouted out derisively: "It's like the march of those men in the yarn: 'He marched them up the hill, and then he marched them down again.'"

But that last march ended the scene; and the next one was going to show the cubs in camp. Meanwhile the little bears were tied to a post at the back of the woodland set, and given a few lumps of sugar to enjoy. But the box of domino sugar had been left standing upon a joist, a few feet away from the cubs' noses—just out of reach. Therefore, when

they had consumed their allotted share of the sugar, one of the cubs began gnawing the rope and soon had it chewed through. He made for the sugar box, just as Betty came around the scenery to see and play with the cubs.

"Oh! Gilly! the bears are loose!" shouted she, excitedly.

The cub had no intention of being captured, however, and he dodged to one side of Betty, and made a dash for Main Street. Here he stood for a moment, blinking in the glaring light, and a bit frightened at seeing such a strange highway for his little paws.

"Catch him! Lasso him!" sounded from several male throats, and Sandy and Rex caught up any rope found handy and started in pursuit. Some of the other men, including Gilly and V., ran out without any practical objects to use in catching the cub, but they joined in the race. The Captain and scouts, all but Julie, ran after the men, to watch what might follow. Julie caught the arm of the camera-man and eagerly advised him.

"Get out and shoot that race. It will be too funny for words. And it will certainly be *au naturel*!"

The camera-man instantly appreciated the suggestion and in another moment he was focussing the

camera eye down Main Street, where the race was running. Julie stood with him, directing the work, in the correct manner of Mr. Alsop, or Mr. Berger.

Up Main Street tore the cub, and behind him raced Scrub, the hired dog for the picture. After the dog ran Rex and Sandy with their lassos, but they found no opportunity to throw it, because there were too many obstacles in the way.

Everyone on Main Street, actors, workmen, directors and visitors, tried to get *into* the way, believing it to be a mob scene, where the more was the merrier. But the bear and his pursurers managed to dodge them, and kept on going to the extreme end of the Lot.

Here the cub turned off and doubled back, to seek another exit from his persecutors. Scrub was close upon him at the time of doubling, but the sudden swerve stopped the dog suddenly, too; and the cub's keeper who had been closely following the dog, tripped over him. Before he crashed down upon the dog, however, Scrub managed to curve his body lithely and swoop from under. The cub's keeper stretched his length upon the street, and right over him rolled a number of pursuers, before they could stop themselves, or realize the obstacle in their pathway.

The cub had dashed down one of the side-streets, and Rex with Sandy thought they surely could capture him in that blind lane. But they saw nothing of him, when they reached the side-street. There were several stages with sets on this by-street, but no bear.

"He must have scampered into one of the sets," said Rex.

On one of the sets a scene was being acted, but no one there had seen a little bear. So the two men sought elsewhere. On the stage opposite that one where the work was going on, they saw the little ball of fur crouching back against some bushes at the far end of the stage. Now they would get him!

As they advanced, coaxing him and trying to calm his trembling body, the cub watched them warily. Just as Sandy lifted the coil of rope to drop it neatly over the cub's head, the bear leaped out and made a swift dash for the opening to the street. In another moment he was across the lane and right into the scene being shot at the time.

Such screaming and shouting as this occasioned was enough to frighten the little animal into fits. But he bravely clawed his way out of the picture, regardless of famous stars or directors; leaving

them examining their scratches and torn apparel, he was away again, and on his way to Main Street. Here he met his Waterloo, in the form of a net, which had been rushed to the opening of the lane and stretched hurriedly across the mouth of it. Straight into this net plunged the cub, and thus he was transported by his keeper back to the Zoo.

No new adventures in movie stunts were enjoyed by the scouts during the filming of their Rocky Mountain scenes, and a week passed by, while all the actors in the pictures worked early and late to complete the episodes of that summer in the Rockies.

The scene, where the Indian Guides entertained the scouts with Indian folk lore, and danced for them, was one interesting scene. Again the picturing of that trip to Flat Top Mountain, and the narrow escapes they had had at that time, provided material for another long bit of camera work. Then the awful experience of losing Jolt, with all the food-stuffs in his pack, over the cliff, and the thrilling rescue of the mule, made a lively piece of acting. In this scene the scouts saw how the Williams' Mat process was operated. Another good bit was the experience of being lost in a blizzard, which blew up suddenly from the peak, and almost caused the

loss of the entire party. The scene of the forest fire had been partly finished, and was now completed with Gilly and Tally to do their own parts in the scene. At last came the scenes of the time they were crossing the desert and lost their way during the sandstorm, that swept up so quickly and hid the trail from view. This scene of the sand blowing across the vast expanse of desert was made possible by most ingenuous methods known and used by motion picture companies to produce hail, snow, or sandstorms. In this scene the scouts were moving on their horses across the stage, where a desert had been built for them. The frightful sandstorm through which they drove, and lived to tell the tale, was produced by having great vats of sand held up by trestles, high enough to allow the sand to filter through the numerous holes in the sides and bottom of these vats. As the cock was opened, to release the fine sand and to run it out into the air, the gale produced by the propellers of the aeroplanes, blew it in the right direction. Then it drifted or piled itself up naturally, wherever it fell. If it struck the horses and scouts, it bounded off or stuck to their hats and coats, and to the animals. This was a very realistic scene indeed, for the director had no need to shout through the megaphone for the

riders to register fear and discomfort, when their faces expressed genuine disgust and dismay at the way the cutting particles of sand bit their way into tender face and hands, and into the softened bodies of the horses.

Everyone was glad when this scene was pronounced O.K.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BATTLE IN THE AIR

BOTH Mr. Alsop and Mr. Berger now arranged to escort the Dandelioners to the Aviation Field, where the thrilling scene of John Dunstan's story would be filmed. For this purpose many automobiles were requisitioned from the company's garage, and not only the scout party, with the Hendersons and Fairfaxes and Sandy, were told off to their seats in the cars; but the workmen, extras, equipment and any other necessity, which might be called for to produce a fine picture, were packed and piled in trucks. Then the word came that all were ready for the start.

The Dandelion Scouts had been well heralded in Los Angeles by this time, the news items of the daily papers having published their object in visiting the City, and the motion picture news of the Sunday papers having spoken of different amusing scenes the girls were making, and the admirable object of this serial picture: the world-wide showing

to the public how girl scouts became trained and thereby grew healthier, nobler, and more refined women than might have been.

Consequently this outing to the Aviation Field, for the purpose of photographing one of the World War scenes between the German and American aeroplanes, had brought a group of newspaper men to the scene of departure, and their kodaks and cameras were heard to click as the scouts waved their hands and were driven away.

"All that work is good publicity for the Organization," remarked Gilly.

"And I took care to have my girls not too prominently in the foreground," admitted the Captain. Then V. laughed and said:

"But I noticed how Faxy and the two Hendersons craned their necks to watch proceedings. They will certainly be starred in the paper to-day, in the illustrated news section."

"Gee! I never thought of that," declared Junior. "I only wanted to see what the girls were doing, while the pictures were being taken."

The drive to the Field was very pleasant, and not very long. Before their arrival at the Field, the visitors could distinguish their hosts waiting for them. So there was a grand hurrah to welcome

them, as soon as the machines came to a stop near the quarters of the men.

The Dandelioners were escorted to the officers' quarters and introduced to the carefully-groomed and courteous men, then all started for the Field, where many 'planes could be seen resting upon the ground.

The scouts marvelled at the changed appearances of the young men they had danced with at the dinner-party, a short time previous to this visit. Now they looked so impressive and different! It was a proof that Mrs. Vernon understood her words spoken to her husband and Gilly the night of that party.

Sandy kept a strict eye upon Julie, for he had no intention of allowing her to fall in love with one of these mesmerizing aviators—not if he knew his business! He knew just how attractive a young man can appear in uniform, for had he not been in uniform himself for years, and knew the value of it upon the human mind?

The camera equipment was attended to, and the workmen had been told off to arrange the different stages for the actual work. Then the aviators were examined for their value in photographing and for their ability to act well without too much rehears-

ing. One thing they all prided themselves upon, and that was their experience in the managing of a 'plane, and in the way they could produce the scene in the battle in the air. No rehearsing necessary for this!

"Now, then," said Mr. Berger, when he felt satisfied in his examinations, "Rex has offered to play the part of John Dunstan, that being the act he witnessed himself and can reproduce best for us. Then Mr. Kirk says he will act the part of Myles, as the 'plane catches fire and falls to earth. This is the most hazardous act of all, and Kirk is said to be the best stunt man in your entire corps. So that's settled. Now, who will act Rex's part and a couple extras, and who the Germans?"

After a lengthy discussion of ways and means to try out the scenes without actual fighting, the first rehearsal began. The directors were delighted with the success of that first rehearsal and decided to try out a camera picture of them that day.

The preliminary acts were filmed then, and by noon all was ready for the air-battle. Now the entire party were notified that luncheon was ready, and the scouts heard the invitation with relief, because they were more than ready for it—especially Anne

Bailey, who could enjoy six hearty meals per day and never notice it!

The luncheon was a jolly affair, and more than an hour had passed before Mr. Berger remembered to glance at his watch.

"Gee whiz! here we sit basking, as though we had not a thing to do forever after; but we want to take advantage of the fine day, and get that scene of the battle. Come, children!"

That ended without further demur all thoughts of merriment at the luncheon, and everyone started out for the Field, where the fighters separated—the Germans to climb into their camouflaged airships, and the American fliers into theirs.

"My! how I wish I could go up with them!" exclaimed Joan, as she watched the Germans rise and soar away to a given point, which was to be their side of the fighting line.

"I prefer going with the Yanks," laughed Julie.

"And I prefer that you remain right here," said the Captain with authority. Her verdict brought a laugh from the other girls.

Then the American fliers started their 'planes; Kirk, as Myles Vernon, leading the air raid.

The camera was carefully focussed and ready to follow the 'planes in their maneuvers, and then the

directors began their instructions to the cameraman. The work of carrying on the fight between the two factions had to be left entirely to the intelligence and experience of the fliers, since no director's voice could be heard by them.

Way down in the distance the camera could just register the scene of tents and men and arms painted upon a canvas scene to look like the army camping there. Myles' plane now flew across the supposed German's lines; it caused several airmen standing upon the ground of that side, to look aloft through field glasses and report to their superior. But the German planes were already flying in the direction of the Americans.

Then the scouts began to feel the excitement of the battle, which was so evident between the two factions. They trembled in their eagerness to see the Yankees gain a victory, yet *all* these aviators were loyal Americans.

Mr. Gilroy noted the tense attitudes, and thrilled expressions of the faces of the scouts, and then spoke. "Why, one would think we were living those war times over again, girls. You are as concerned over the Yankee side, as though this were a real battle."

"That shows how motion pictures truly grip the

mind," said Mrs. Vernon. "It is one's own imagination that creates the emotions which cause us to sense the pathos or humor in the picture. Now that scene of the aviators up there. If we had not been aware of the planned attack and battle of the American men with the Germans, we would be standing here quite casually watching maneuvers of the aviators. Just the imaging of a battle in our mind, and the thoughts of what has taken place years ago, and now seems to be resurrected before our eyes, makes the acting so real to us."

Mr. Vernon had not spoken a word since coming from the luncheon, and he did not speak now. He was thinking of his son's share in the Great War, and what his heroism had meant to his father and mother. It was indeed a supreme sacrifice—that of his life! And it meant that for every one in that family of three.

Now the American fliers took note of the machine guns of the Germans, which were sending volleys aloft from the bushes and earth-banks where the guns were hidden. These shots were all blank, but the smoke registered as genuine on the film, when the camera got the scene.

The German faction now seemed to gain the ascendancy for a time, and a volley of shot from

the small gun of one German 'plane nearest Myles' 'plane, caught his ship and instantly started the 'planes burning,—or seemed to.

Kirk had had to watch carefully to note exactly when the German shot his load at him. Since the shot was merely a blank shell, only the smoke could tell Rex when to start the fuse which would create a small wisp of smoke burning on his ship.

Then the hidden man, who was to take care of the make-believe fire that destroyed the aeroplane, was given the signal; and at the same time Kirk began looping the loop, to make the camera register a picture of his having been shot, and having the ship come tumbling down to earth, while the smoke issued from it and flame soon enveloped it.

The scouts held their breaths and their eyes fairly popped in excitement, as Kirk performed a marvelous loop-the-loop in the air. At the time the signal came for the fire to start, the extra began burning smudge enough to choke the aviator. But the scene was fine, and the camera got all until Kirk managed to drop his aeroplane below the line of vision where it would be seen by the camera.

The battle between the other aviators continued until the small American squad had been demolished, or taken prisoners, and then the large fleet of Ger-

man 'planes soared down to their own camp, with the two captured 'planes in tow.

Rex landed about this time, and sent word to the directors that he would go up again, and attend to the scene aloft of actually burning an old aeroplane which had been scrapped as useless. He would then fly out of the scene and allow the camera to grind out the footage while the 'plane burned and crashed down to earth. The demolished 'plane and the aviator Myles Vernon who had been killed, would then be discovered upon the ground, with John Dunstan's aeroplane caught in the tree, from which Rex and the Germans released him.

At this stage of the picture the scouts could be heard weeping, and the boys pretended to cough every now and then. Mr. Gilroy scowled fiercely and blew his nose loudly, but Mr. Vernon turned and quickly walked away. The Captain continued to wait and watch with not a sign of expression upon her frozen face. But the actors in this were sublimely unconscious of the emotions they were stirring up in the hearts and souls of their spectators. The camera continued doing its work without a break in the footage, and when Rex's aeroplane had started the discarded 'plane burning, and he had swooped out of the picture again,

the doomed air-ship did its turn in the scene.

What deep sighs of relief were heard, when the actual scene of that battle was concluded, and the aeroplanes came gradually to rest on the Field once more.

"Say! that's going to be a winner, I'll tell the world!" shouted Mr. Berger, mopping his dripping face.

"But we got to get that bit while we're here on the Lot, of carrying the body to the German camp and have it connect up with the scenes taken on the stage," said Mr. Alsop.

Mrs. Vernon did not remain for that scene, but she asked the girls to join Mr. Vernon and her at the quarters, as soon as the scene was finished. Not till then were the scouts aware of the awful grayness of their Captain's face, and the effect the picture must have had on her feelings.

"We're not going to wait for that last bit," declared Joan, nudging Julie in the side, to have her agree with her.

"No, we are tired of all the watching, with our heads so far back," agreed Julie.

"Our necks are stiff, and our spines ache," added Judith.

So they all accompanied their beloved Captain

from the scene, and soon they were approaching Mr. Vernon at the house, where the officers were entertaining him.

The young aviators were most insistent in having the entire party remain to dinner at the Field, but the Captain was firm in her refusal.

"We must go back to the hotel and rest to-night. There will be a strenuous day before us to-morrow, you know. But you young men will come and dine with us, next week, I trust, and then we will have another nice dance. Is it not so?" said she.

So the new admirers of the Dandelion scouts had to be satisfied with that much hope for the future, and they accompanied the girls to the automobiles, and stood with longing hearts showing in the expression of their eyes, when the cars were driven away to the City.

CHAPTER XIV

THE END OF THE SERIAL

ANOTHER week was sufficient to finish up the Rocky Mountain scenes, and then the directors began the new scenes of the wonderful trip through Arizona and New Mexico. Here the pictures taken of the Forest Ranger would come in, to be connected up with the new serial film now to be done.

But there was a great disappointment in store for the youthful stars of the serial. Mr. Fairfax and Mr. Henderson returned from their wanderings, in southern California and Mexico, and declared themselves ready to start back home. Poor Faxy and the Henderson boys would have to accompany their parents eastward, because there was no plausible reason for their remaining in Hollywood. When questioned about the new pictures about to be made for the scout serial, Mr. Berger assured the boys he could use extras just as well as not; besides it would be a charity to help out some of the poor actors, who sat around in the waiting room hoping for a part to play.

Consequently the Dandelioners took the day from work at the studio the morning the boys departed. This much balm had been poured into the broken hearts of Faxy, Hendy and Junior: a picnic had been planned by the girls for that day; and all the members of their party, including Sandy and the two directors, were to drive in their automobiles along the road taken by the homeward bound auto-ists. At noon hour, when all would stop and have a camp luncheon, the scouts would prepare the meal and serve it to their friends, and thus send off the boys with happier memories.

Everything went as merry as a wedding bell, until they were sitting under a group of trees, upon the grass, in a pleasant meadow, enjoying the nice lunch prepared by the scouts and the Captain. Only Faxy glowered across at Sandy, now and then, whenever he thought of leaving Julie behind with his cousin.

Sandy caught that glance several times and understood what it meant. Therefore, with rare generosity, he decided to give Faxy a chance to have the girl of the love of his young and susceptible heart for himself, for a short time, when the others were packing up the camp kits to start on their way.

So Sandy managed to sidle up alongside Faxy and whisper the idea in his ear. Instantly Faxy

grinned happily, and clasped his cousin's hand in both his, to shake it in gratitude for this boon.

Well, the scouts had finished their luncheon, and then began to clean the dishes and clear away the debris of the meal. Some of the girls removed the papers and trash, and some took charge of the dishes. Julie was one who had disappeared and did none of these duties.

Faxy and she were away under another group of trees, and Faxy was begging Julie to swear that she would never love any other beau but him. And Julie was trying with great difficulty to keep from laughing outright. Finally Faxy had said all he could think of, to impress so wonderful a girl, and then he paused and gave Julie a chance to speak.

"Oh, Faxy dear," began Julie, steadying her voice, "You know I am not in love with anyone. I never said I loved you, nor will I say it to anyone in this world, that I know of. There may be some one, somewhere, at some time, that I will think worth my life, but now! why, Faxy, I am going to be a successful writer of the best seller of the publishing world. My book is going through eleventeen editions! Think of that. Isn't that worth more than mere love of a mere man?"

Faxy stared at her in dismay. Where now were

his dreams and plans for the distant future? He stared for a minute, in a vacant manner, then the expression on his face changed gradually to one of nervous annoyance. And he began wriggling as though he had some queer nervous ailment.

"What is the matter with you, Faxy? Sit still, can't you," demanded Julie, when his wriggling and nervousness began to worry her.

"Ju—lie—" began Faxy, but he stopped short and leaped to his feet, to writhe and twist the better, and stop the strange creeping that ran all over his body.

But Julie now began to feel that creepy, tickling sensation on her skin, under her clothing, and she started to wriggle, too. She sprang up and looked down at the nice sandy bank upon which they had been seated.

"Oh, Faxy! Look at what we've been sitting on—a red-ant hill. Ow-w-woh! I'm covered with 'em!" cried she.

"Then we're both in the same boat. What can we do? No dressing-rooms to change our clothes, and no way to rid ourselves of the pests," was Faxy's wail, through clenched teeth.

Julie had to laugh, yet she was in misery from the tiny ants that tickled and irritated her. "I'm

off for the others, and see what can be done for us," she called over her shoulder.

Julie raced into camp and explained at once what had happened to them while they sat upon the big sand mound. A chorus of laughter greeted this news, but Julie continued her story.

"Now you've all got to help get the two tents out of Henderson's pack on the running board, and rig them up as quickly as hands can do it, if you care to save my life, and the mind of Faxy. He's half insane already."

Sandy's proposition to Faxy, to give him a sweet five minutes with Julie that noon, had failed to soothe the forlorn beau. He came back with his coat off, and his hands seeking to drive the tiny ants from his body, with no success.

The tents were pitched hastily, to provide a dressing-room for Julie, and one for Faxy. Then the giggling scouts brought water in pails, in which salt had been dissolved. And the two pestered individuals bathed themselves in this water. While Julie and Faxy bathed and thus drove off the ants, their friends cleaned their garments and at last pronounced the three million trespassers completely routed.

That was a jolly good-by anyway; the laughter

created at the predicament of Faxy and his sweetheart having given everyone the desire to find amusement in this parting, instead of lament and tears.

Then the two families bound for the East started away, and the scouts' party, remaining in the West, started their cars back for Los Angeles.

"Dear me," complained Julie, after they had returned to the hotel and were spending a quiet evening, "it seems perfectly awful to have one cavalier for so many girls. Sandy, I'm afraid you, too, will run away shortly, because of the many claims on your time."

"No danger of my running away, Julie, while you are present to encourage me," said Sandy meaningly. The other members in the group laughed, because Julie seldom gave the young Forest Ranger any opportunity to make such a remark.

"Well, I was thinking," now said Judith seriously, "that Rex ought to have his friends in the aviation work come over more frequently, and solace us disconsolate ones."

"I wish they might spare the time to do some of those California scenes with us, now that Junior, Faxy and Hendy have gone East," suggested Joan eagerly.

"No harm in asking Rex to find out," added Julie.

"Judith is the one to do that," laughed one of the other girls. "He can't refuse her anything."

"That's just why it wouldn't be proper for me to ask him, and I'm not going to do it," declared Judith. "Would Julie ask Sandy a personal favor, and feel herself under obligations to give him all her time for æons to come?"

This was another view of the matter, and Julie admitted that Judith was right in her idea. But Sandy thought otherwise.

Mr. Alsop had secured a few extras to act in place of the three young men, but the girls found the acting not half so interesting or satisfying as it had been. Still the work had to continue to a finish, and this seemed to be the only way the scenes might be secured.

One night, after a trying day with three very self-satisfied young actors, the scouts sat comparing them with the three departed ones.

"Now, in that scene in the Coastal Redwoods, the night we got lost in the fog, and could not find our way back to the camp: did you notice how those silly chaps thought it was the place and time to make love to us?" was Julie's scornful question.

"If they had known the actual incident, as our other three boys had known it, we need not have wasted a whole afternoon doing the scene over and over."

"That's because most of the actors in the movies are so accustomed to get in love scenes, wherever a chance opens for one, that it becomes habit," laughed Sandy.

"It's because the public likes to sit and watch such a picture," defended Rex. "You show a picture with real and clean scenes in it throughout, and the first thing the producer knows he has a film that becomes unpopular."

"Then it's high time we instructed the public better!" exclaimed Julie. "But, Rex, I do not agree with you in what you state to be the cause for unpopular pictures. I think, from all I've seen of the movies, that once you producers put your foot on the soft pedal of too much love stuff, you also stop all the other thrills and action. It seems to be a lamentable fact that scenario writers have a one-track mind: they must always be giving out love-scenes, or they fall down in their work. Since some of the companies have been using the classics for their pictures, we have been getting genuine plays, without all the mushy trash."

"Julie is right, Rex," added the Captain, who had been quietly listening to the conversation thus far. "I have been disgusted with writers and producers in the motion picture industry, just because they judge the public from their own viewpoint. The public merely sits through the kind of pictures it has had to tolerate, for *lack* of anything better. The public,—this is my interpretation, and that of a number of intelligent thinkers on the subject,—goes to a motion picture theatre, because it is a delightful diversion from a hard day's work, and it does not cost the fortune one has to have in these times to attend a legitimate play. One can sit an hour or two, as one prefers, and sees pictures that pass the time. The travelogues, and the comedies, change one's thoughts, and rest the tired brain, after a long day of close concentration to other things. But the majority of the audience, once they pay their entrance fee, and are comfortably seated to witness a picture, do not get up again to leave the theatre until the end of the show. That show may present a foolish love story, which thoroughly disgusts and annoys the audience, or it may instruct and point a moral, and thus increase interest in the minds of the public, yet the public will go just the same, no matter what is shown them. The producers ought

to wake up to the truth: that it is not the actual picture that fills their theatres, be those pictures good or bad; but it is the fact that the movies provide a place where everyone can go, with little cost of money. I am convinced that a good thriller of scout life will draw just as big a crowd of movie fans, as any foolish love story has done in the past."

"Perhaps we can demonstrate to the motion picture theatre owners that our sort of pictures will bring them in larger cash receipts, than the old kind they have been thrusting upon the patient public," remarked Julie.

"But this isn't getting us ready for to-morrow's work," was the reminder from Sandy, who said he had a full day on the morrow.

Hence the friends said good-night to each other and went to their rooms.

CHAPTER XV

SAFETY PINNING LOOSE ENDS.

THE work on the serial continued with more or less satisfaction to the scouts. The one cause of their complaints being the lack of personal understanding of the Redwoods' experiences on the part of the three strange actors. Rex helped out whenever he had time, and he had promised to secure the assistance of several aviators, who had called at different times to spend their evenings with the girls.

Betty still wondered at the jumble of the pictures, and worried lest the continuity workers would not find the right ones to "safety-pin" to the following scenes in their scout-life pictures.

"I'm sure you cannot help them out on that, Betty," was Julie's laughing remark. "They cut and arrange so many thousands of these films right along, that they won't digress on account of the picture being our scout work."

"But, Julie, don't you see: they run off a scene in the Painted Desert, like yesterday's work, and

then they do one on Lake Tahoe, the same afternoon. To-day Mr. Berger had us do the New York scene, when we said good-by to our friends, and then he had us go on the scene in the mesa in New Mexico. One minute we are doing scenes in the Petrified Forest, and the next we are pretending we are in St. Miguel's Mission. To-morrow Mr. Alsop says we are to make the pictures of the Grand Canyon, down in that camp beside the Colorado River, because he has the tank fixed up for just such a scene. But we haven't done the Bright Angel Trail yet, and goodness knows when we will."

Everyone laughed. Julie exclaimed in wonderment: "Listen to Betty! Did you hear all she had to say? Goodness me, folks, that is the first time since we appeared on earth as partners in life, that I have heard her say so much in so animated a way. Why, Betty is actually beginning to battle for her own opinions!"

Betty frowned and wondered why Julie said such ridiculous things about her! But the friends laughed the more heartily at her.

Betty then decided to ignore their remarks about her, and she continued: "If you will stop and think of what I've said, you'll see I am right. This afternoon when Mr. Berger said we were going to do the

Canyon to-morrow, I asked him if we were going to Arizona? and how long would it take us to get there and back. He laughed and explained that he was having the Canyon painted on canvas for us.

"Then I asked him how he could ever reproduce the trail running down the side, so our burros could travel on it, and he only laughed again. He said he would do the actual scenes in the Canyon in relays—that is in sections, and each section would be painted exactly as our scenes called for. Now what does he mean by that? I am so mixed up by all this movie business, and the crazy way they make us put the cart before the horse!"

The scouts were all eager to explain, but Rex had the best of it, because he understood the terms and the methods of doing the work. So he explained patiently to Betty.

"You see, it will be this way, Betty. The painters will wait until the trade jacks have built up a great side wall of canvas that is propped at the back by trestles, similar to that one made for the rapids in the Rocky Mountain gorge, that Julie and Joan used in their scene, the day Julie hung over the river by means of catching the seat of her knickers on that spike. Well, these great rocks of canvas will be painted to imitate pictures of the Canyon. First

you will have the upper section of Bright Angel Trail, and you will be seen riding down it on the burros; but it will be for a short trip only, because then you have to 'cut' and go to another section, where the Trail continues down another stretch of canvas. The Indian Gardens, where you rested, will be still another stretch of canvas, and so on until the Colorado River is reached, where you camped. But that will be the scene on the tank side, with the river waters churned madly by the vacuum blowers, or the airplane propellers, as the case needs."

Betty comprehended better now than before, still she said it would be far more sensible for a director to let the actors play a picture from start to finish, and not confuse the players.

"Mr. Alsop and Mr. Berger were discussing the advisability of having us all go to the Mojave Desert for the pictures to be done there," announced Sandy.

"Really! Then we will have a regular lark of a time," was Julie's reply.

"We can picnic all the time. What fun, to have a crowd of people on a camping tour like that," added Judith.

"I can see where I throw over my personal in-

terests and go with you to help out in the scout work," ventured Rex, with a sidelong glance at Judith.

"And you will have to enlist the unselfish interests of a few of the aviators to lend us the necessary atmosphere," suggested Mrs. Vernon.

"Atmosphere? What can you mean, when we will have all the desert atmosphere we can use?" wondered Julie.

"Well, I was referring to the usual atmosphere of many male admirers whenever the Troop has an outing. You had Faxy, Junior and Hendy, to say naught of Gilly and V., during your camping trip in the Mohave."

"Mr. Alsop told me that he thought favorably of having us all go from here to San Francisco, and start there to tour along the road we took on our flight to the Desert. He thinks it will save a lot of expense and time by going over the actual road," said Rex.

"Wouldn't that be fun! and you could get several real nice boys to take the part of the other three," declared the girls.

The following day the scouts were informed by Mr. Berger that the scene painters had not finished their work on the Canyon. "So I plan to have you

do a number of safety-pin scenes to-day, and then we'll decide on the work for to-morrow," said he.

"How disappointing! I was looking forward to riding down a canvas trail on one of your mule's backs," laughed Julie.

"Our scene painter reported that he would have the canyon ready to deliver in three days," added Mr. Alsop. This news caused a laugh from the scouts.

"How simple the scene painter makes modern touring," said the Captain. "All one does, is to order a set, and then wait for its delivery. I'm curious to see how this one succeeds in that grand and marvelous bit of Nature's art."

Julie's album of snapshots had come in very handy for the artist who was to picture the *reel* canyon and the Bright Angel Trail, leading down to the swift Colorado River at the bottom, where the scouts camped on that memorable trip.

The bits of acting and "safety-pin" work of filming now continued several days, until the scene painter came and announced his work done.

Quite a curious group started for the long field, where the water tank had provided such amusing scenes for them. Now the tank was there, but how changed! It represented the Colorado River at

the bottom of the gorge, and the mighty cliffs on the opposite side rose until the sky topped their colorful peaks of canvas.

"We have to take the camp scene first," said Mr. Berger, "because we had the water here waiting for us. When that scene is done we will have the men drain all the water away and cover the tank with the boards, and then scatter sand over them. Now, girls, ready for that night camp on the banks of the awful torrent!"

The strange methods used to portray their scenes to the gullible public had begun to lose interest for the scouts; and the day-after-day work of posing and being camera-ed for the movies became palling. Their active outdoor life and interest in ever changing scenery as produced by Nature made them dissatisfied with the means to an end, as perfected by the Stellar Picture Company.

Therefore it was with silent, though not less satisfied, sighs of relief that the Dandelioners finally heard the directors declare that all the work was finished for the scout serial. All that remained to be pictured could be done by extras, and by dummies.

"But we are crazy to see you run off the films in their continuity before our eyes," said Julie, as the

directors told them the summer's work was over.

"That would be impossible at once," said Mr. Alsop. "You see, we have to do so much trimming and connecting—safety-pin work—before we can run off the finished product."

"Well, anyway, we are not starting back East at once, are we, Gilly," said Joan, "and we might stop here again, in a few weeks' time, to see if you have it ready to show us."

"I haven't arranged to start East at once, but I am waiting for a telegram to inform me what I am to do about a certain visit to certain mountains, you have not heretofore dreamed of, where I have learned fine samples of mineral rock and glacial deposits are to be had."

"Oh! tell us where that is, Gilly!" cried the girls, in unison.

"That is not possible now, Dandelioners, because I am sworn to strictest secrecy about the plan. But you may rest assured that you will be the first to share in this secret, if I am authorized to take the trip. In fact, I believe we can do it before we have to start back home for the winter. You girls can spare me the time, can you not?"

"Oh, to be sure," returned Julie.

"But I have to get back by September, Gilly," said

Hester. "And Anne Bailey said she had to be on hand for the opening of school, where she teaches the primary class."

"Perhaps we might arrange it, so that you could find a substitute for a few weeks," suggested the Captain.

"Well, that will not be a bridge to cross until we are sure of Gilly's plans," said Joan, with matter-of-fact common sense.

So the scouts left Hollywood at last, and drove to the hotel in Los Angeles, where they would wait to hear from Gilly and his orders to move on.

THE END

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